

GERALD FITZGERALD.

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GERALD FITZGERALD;

An Irish Tale.

BY ANN ORSWANSEA,

AUTHOR OF

UNCLE PEREGRINE'S HEIRESS; CONVICTION; GONZALO DE BALDIVIA;
DEEDS OF THE OLDEN TIME; SECRETS IN EVERY MANSION;
WOMAN'S A RIDDLE; GUILTY OR NOT GUILTY, &c. &c.

The man who harbours enmity in his bosom, cherishes a serpent to sting himself.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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GERALD FITZGERALD.

CHAP. I

"This is the heir to all the pride, the vice,
And folly of his race."

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—————"Volatile—impetuous—
Full of himself—jealous—presumptuous—
Fiery in his passions—yielding to every caprice,
And daring enough to vindicate his vices,
At the point of his sword."

For he through sin's long labyrinth had run,
Nor made atonement when he did amiss;
Had sigh'd to many, though he ne'er lov'd one;
For true love never enter'd soul like his.
Ah, happy she! to 'scape from him, whose kiss
Had been pollution unto aught so chaste;
Who soon had left her charms for vulgar bliss,
And spoil'd her goodly lands to gild his waste,
Nor calm domestic peace had ever deign'd to taste.

BYRON'S *Child Harold*.

As

"WHAT a shocking disagreeable morning," said Miss Forbes, walking from the window, where she had been fretfully watching the rain, and taking up and

laying down, the books, drawings, and toys, that were scattered in elegant confusion round the room.—“ Dear me,” said she, glancing at the sky, “ I was in hopes it would clear up, and only see how provoking; it rains faster and heavier than ever.”

“ By the uneasiness you express about the weather,” observed Miss Obrien, laying down a French novel, “ one would suppose you had made an assignation with a favoured lover, which the rain prevents your keeping.”

“ Me an assignation! Well, only think how droll!” exclaimed Miss Forbes. “ No, indeed, upon my word and honour, I have made no assignation; I am only vexed at the rain, because papa promised we should take a ride this morning; and I do not know what to do with myself; and, dear me, you know, how can I make an assignation when I have no lover?”

“ That is a sufficient reason against it, most certainly,” replied Miss Obrien.

“ Old Nick has an assignation this morning, which it appears he intends to keep, in spite of the rain,” said the ho-

nourable Mrs. Chatterton, hastening to the window; "for his carriage is driving towards the *porte cochère*: as sure as I live, the little disagreeable wretch is off, bag and baggage; for his servants are strapping on a trunk; and here comes old Nick himself, and the ox, wrapped up in their hideous fur cloaks. Thank Heaven, we are delivered from the annoyance of their company. Well," continued Mrs. Chatterton, "I give lady Indiana Corry great credit for rejecting that dull, heavy mass of stupidity, Oxmantown. I saw clearly, from the first, it would never be a match; it was evident to me she hated him."

"And no doubt you as clearly discerned her preference of the honourable colonel Lismore," said Miss O'Brien.

"Poor thing! I really pity her folly and presumption, if she hopes to attach him," replied lady Mazarina Macnamara, colouring and looking spiteful; "her superiors in person and acquirements have been mistaken and disappointed in the attempt; for it is well understood, he is the most heartless creature in the world."

"How should it be otherwise!" said Miss O'Brien; "after having sustained so many attacks, his heart has been divided and subdivided, till he can have none left; and if lady Indiana Corry has driven off the ox for his sake, she will soon discover her error; for, depend upon it, like the simpletons that have gone before her, she will find that the gallant colonel only means a little flirtation *en chemin faisant*."

"But is it true, though," asked Annabella Forbes, "that lady Indiana wrote a love-letter to lord Cloghnickelty? If she did, I am sure it was monstrous bold of her, and downright shameful, that she should laugh in his face, when he made her an offer of his hand."

"A love-letter to old Nick!" exclaimed Miss O'Brien. "What a delightful hoax!"

"I can take upon me to assert, from the very best authority," rejoined Mrs. Chatterton, "that lady Indiana did not design a hoax; she merely wrote the bold fool, that she did not like his nephew, and declined his addresses, because she preferred another, which other, Cloghnickelty had the extreme folly to fancy must be him-

self: lady Stella Savage was at the *denotement*, and, as she describes it, a more entertaining scene cannot be imagined."

"It must have been an exquisite treat," said Miss Obrien: "how I should have enjoyed the rage of old Nick, and the disappointment of the ox!"

"Not much disappointment there, I believe," replied Mrs. Chatterton; "but, at any rate, that matrimonial scheme is at an end: the affair is off entirely."

"I am sure I am extremely glad they are off," observed lady Mazarina Macnamara; "for a more tiresome disagreeable person than old Nick I never met in my life; and as to the ox, he was frightful and disgusting, with his round, staring, lead-coloured eyes, and his wide mouth, and enormous large teeth."

"His voice, squeaking and whispering, was more disagreeable to me than his person," said Annabella Forbes; "and his affectation about his delicate health, and his weak nerves, was quite sickening."

"Very true indeed," replied Miss Forbes; "he was a shocking ugly monster of a man; and only think, he always looked

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at himself, if there was a mirror near him, instead of the person he was speaking to! As Annabella observes, he is a great frightful lump of affectation; and I hate and detest an affected man.

"I dare say you speak your real sentiments, Miss Forbes, and your actual opinion of the gentlemen in question," said lady Mazarina Macnamara, "in which I most cordially join, from the bottom of my heart."

"I dare say you do," rejoined Miss O'Brien; "yet excuse me observing, ugly and disagreeable as lord Cloghnickelty and his nephew indubitably are, they would be eagerly accepted by some ladies I could name, who, in the transport of securing establishments, would catch at their offers, and forget the cork leg of the one, and ogre teeth of the other."

Lady Mazarina Macnamara did not chuse to appear conscious that this was meant at her; but Miss Forbes, not having her countenance under such perfect command, blushed, and twisted her fingers, like a school girl not perfect in her lesson, and anxious to get rid of the subject, again

complained of the weather; and to prove her mind's affinity to that of the inimitable Master Slender, talked of a book of riddles, which she was sorry she had left at home, for they were such clever things, and would have helped to pass away a dull rainy morning charmingly.

Annabella Forbes, having wondered at a hundred things not the least surprising to any one else, at last wondered that Miss Lambart had not appeared among them that morning.

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton looked at her gold repeater, and said—"Miss Lambart is at her studies with her pupils; it is too early by half an hour for her appearance."

"Pupils! la!" exclaimed Annabella Forbes; "dear me, has Miss Lambart a school in Doneraile Castle? and does she instruct the children herself?"

"Well, for my part, I detest study, and school, and all such dull stupid work," said Miss Forbes; "and only think of Miss Lambart taking the trouble to instruct children herself, when she can so well af-

ford to pay other people to take such drudgery off her hands!"

"Miss Lambart rises with the lark," replied Mrs. Chatterton, "and devotes four hours every morning to music, painting, and reading; and her pupils are lady Stella Savage and lady Indiana Corry."

"Only think how odd!" resumed Miss Forbes; "four hours every morning to study! dear me, how prodigious fatiguing! I am sure I should be tired to death. Have not they finished their educations? I am sure my sister and me were so glad to leave school, and give over learning tiresome lessons, that we never think of sitting down to an instrument longer than to play a lively tune or two; and as to a pencil, we hate painting and drawing; and, worse than all the rest, we detest reading; though we have enough to make us sick of books for the next half year, when we are staying at aunt Mahon's, for she makes us read a chapter in the Bible every morning and evening."

"Say no more, I beg, sister," said Annabella; "the naming a visit to aunt Ma-

hon, and the thought of the huge family Bible, makes me ill."

"Yes, I dare say it does," resumed Miss Forbes; "but then papa says she is very rich, and we must not offend her; for only think what a sad thing it would be if she was to give all her money to the Malooneys, and leave us out of her will."

Lord Cloghnickelty found he had made himself ridiculous, by adopting the suggestions of his witty valet, Mr. Ryan; and not chusing to be laughed at, and made the jest of the earl of Vandeleur's guests, he gave orders for an immediate removal to his own seat, where, if his present vexation brought on a fit of the gout, of which he fancied he felt symptoms, Mrs. Macfane would be at hand, and ready to become his attentive and humble nurse, proud to accept any act of kindness he might be inclined to favour her with, and to acknowledge any notice he might bestow upon her with becoming gratitude: but while Cloghnickelty calmed his mind, and derived no small consolation from this arrangement, it was by no means pleasing

or satisfactory to the honourable Mr. Oxmantown, who, from the gentleness and seeming sympathy with which Miss Lambart listened to him, when he lamented to her his nervous afflictions, drew the flattering conclusion, that were time and proper opportunity allowed him, he might render himself agreeable to her; but on his hinting a wish to offer her his addresses, Cloghnickelty fell into a furious passion, called him puppy and fool, and bade him at once dismiss that idle notion out of his stupid head; for it was well known that Miss Lambart was engaged, and as her intended husband was reported to be handsome, elegant, clever, and lively, it was not possible to believe she would listen to such a dull, heavy, doleful, dismal, as him.

The third morning after the departure of lord Cloghnickelty and his nephew, Miss Lambart had selected a book, and was quietly seated in the bay-window of the ladies' reading-room, deeply immersed in the enchantments of poetry, when the door of the apartment was suddenly thrown open, and a very tall, and extremely handsome young man, whom she instantly re-

cognised as lord Conway, hastily advanced to salute her.—“As neither the earl of Vandeleur nor the countess are visible,” said he, “it is a most agreeable surprise to find you so early a riser, my dear cousin; and I gladly avail myself of this opportunity to apologize to you for not being here, to offer you my congratulations and kindest wishes on your birthday.”

Miss Lambart's eyes sunk beneath the burning glance and intense gaze of lord Conway; she gently withdrew her hand from the ardent clasp of his, and replied, briefly and candidly, as she felt, “That attendance on a sick friend was a sufficient apology.” Not satisfied of the propriety of remaining *tête-à-tête* with a young man, though so near a relation, she proposed sending Mrs. Blandy to inform the countess of Vandeleur of his arrival; but lord Conway objected to disturbing his mother, before her usual hour. Drawing a chair near the window, he begged she would resume her seat; but this she declined, and taking up her book, was about to retire, when, starting up, he threw, rather than moved, aside the chair, on

which he had been sitting, and in a tone that ill disguised his displeasure, he said, "he was sorry he had interrupted her studies, entreated she would not depart, as he should go and take the refreshment of a cup of coffee, and change his travelling habiliments, which he supposed would occupy his time till the earl and countess left their chamber."

Forgetting how much cause he had given his fair cousin to dislike him, and fully sensible of the improved grace and elegance of his person, lord Conway had expected a much warmer and impassioned greeting, and his vanity was sorely piqued at the perfect calmness of her behaviour; his arrival had occasioned neither agitation, blushes, nor confusion; her reception of him was any thing but flattering to his self-love, for he had long considered himself a demigod, and expected to meet universal homage and admiration from the fair sex; but disguising his offended pride, he forced his haughty lips to assume a smile, as he advised Ada to beware of becoming a *bas bleu*—a character that, in spite of her beauty, would frighten away

all her admirers, for men in general detested learned women.

When his lordship had retired, Miss Lambart endeavoured to reason her agitated spirits into calmness—for agitated they were, by the appearance of her cousin, though his arrival had for some time been daily expected; and in defiance of her desire to overcome the prejudice she felt against lord Conway, she found it was too deeply rooted to be removed. His air of self-approval, the bold, and to her, peculiarly disagreeable expression of his large flashing eyes, had increased her feelings of dislike to terror; though, while her nerves trembled, she could not assign form or shape to her apprehensions, or in any way explain to herself what she had to fear from so near a relation, unless, indeed, as her foster-mother had frequently hinted, his parents wished to bring about a marriage between them; in which case, if he was induced to enter into their views, she might be exposed to great annoyance, and suffer much persecution. While reflecting how more than ever unpleasant her six months' residence with the earl and

countess of Vandeleur might be made, by the addresses and solicitations of lord Conway, she suddenly recollected the poetry recited to herself and her young friends, under the arcade, and the figure that had disappeared through the conservatory: of the figure her glance had been so transient, she could not venture to affirm whether it did or did not resemble lord Conway, but the voice, clear, distinct, and harmonious, —the never-to-be-forgotten voice was assuredly his. But why had he sought concealment?—why had he preserved an incognito so mysterious? were questions Ada could in no way answer to her own satisfaction; and the certainty that he had, unknown to the family, been some days resident at the castle, filled her with alarm, for such concealment must have a motive, and she had a fearful presentiment that his designs were evil.

“The person of lord Conway,” thought Ada, as she dried the tears that fell upon her cheek, “is certainly grand and imposing—his features too are decidedly handsome; but I do not like the proud curl of his lip—his smile expresses more

the sneer of deceit than the emanation of honest heart-felt pleasure—and his eyes are fearfully brilliant. Heaven defend me! they remind me of all that I have read of the blighting and unholy lustre of a fallen spirit.”

Determined to be in all points his own master, and to submit to no questioning or lectures on his past or future conduct, lord Conway's first interview with his parents was marked with disrespectful defiance, and recriminations on his part, to the full as bitter as their reproaches, and an avowed determination of departing for Dublin immediately, if he was to be pestered with their advice, trammelled by their opinions, and restricted in his expences like a schoolboy.

Offended as the earl of Vandeleur was with the extravagant bills drawn upon him by his son, during the last two years of his travels, and the disobedience of his conduct since his return to Ireland, his menace of quitting the castle produced the effect lord Conway expected—the earl's angry bark became a low growl, and the countess, proud and delighted with the

graceful and handsome exterior of her son, readily forgave all his faults, of which only the most venial had reached her ear; she took advantage of the earl's subsiding rage, and exerted herself to bring about a reconciliation, and obtain for her idol Alfred a liberal addition to his present yearly allowance: but for this present kindness to her son, and apparent anxiety to restore peace between him and his father, the countess had a motive, which she rather prematurely betrayed, by observing, that the forgiving and generous disposition evinced by the earl, demanded, and would no doubt obtain from her dear Alfred, such grateful remembrance, as would induce a dutiful compliance with their wishes, which could only have his interest and honour for their object.

Lord Conway perfectly understood the meaning of the countess; but as his wishes had not the same termination as theirs, he determined to let his parents see that he was beyond their control, and he at once replied—"I shall not act the hypocrite, madam, and affect gratitude for what I consider my right. The income the earl

has agreed to give me, is not more than the heir of the earldom of Vandeleur is entitled to expect, nor would less properly support the rank I hold in society. As to my dutiful compliance with the wishes my father and your ladyship may have formed for me, I will bind myself by no promise: what your wisdom may consider for my honour and interest, I may think hateful and oppressive; where compliance will not militate against my own ideas of happiness, you may rely on my obedience: but remember, madam, I reserve to myself the freedom of rejecting, in all cases where my inclination cannot approve." Lord Conway having thus plainly expressed his intentions, bowed and retired.

"These are the effects of associating with philosophers and free-thinkers," exclaimed the earl; "the expansion of intellect, which your ladyship has expatiated upon with so much delight, when you read your son's letters, proves, you see, the subversion of his principles." The light of reason that he wrote so eloquently upon, has utterly destroyed all duty and obedience to us, whom he looks upon merely

as the instruments of his being. If I had fifty sons, not one of them should ever quit the shores of Ireland. For the attainment of superficial graces, Alfred has bartered all proper feeling; foreign companions, foreign morals, have corrupted the heart of my son."

But in these reproaches, the earl did the opinions and morals of the continent injustice; the heart of Alfred lord Conway contained the germinating seeds of vice before he left Doneraile Castle, where all his evil passions had been encouraged in their growth by the pride and indulgence of his parents; and these had only gained a firmer root, and more decided shape, by associating while abroad with characters eminent alike for brilliant attainments, and the utter disregard of religion and morality.

The countess palliated the faults of her son, by observing, at his age, young men were apt to be headstrong, but she did not believe his heart was bad; and when once married to his cousin Ada, she had no doubt but he would become reasonable in his ideas, and rational in his conduct; and

support his rank and situation in life with proper dignity.

"He will never marry his cousin," returned the earl; "mark my words, Alicia; in this, as in every thing else, he will be refractory—he will assert his right to please himself in the choice of a wife."

"Ada will be his choice," resumed the countess; "is she not beautiful, sensible, gentle, and rich?"

"She is all this, I allow," said the earl; "but Alfred will never marry her; besides, should he approve the alliance, how are you certain that she will not refuse?"

"There is little danger of that," replied the countess, smiling proudly; "you seem, my lord, to overlook the advantages of person so eminently possessed by lord Conway. What girl of her age—nay, what woman with the least pretension to taste, could be insensible to such a lover?"

"I doubt his ever becoming, or even professing himself Ada's lover," replied the earl. "Well, well, we shall see; and as we cannot ensure the success of our plans, it will be wisdom on our part, to

to take off the bitterness of disappointment, by being prepared to meet it."

The countess, wearied with her lord's doubts and suspicions, was glad to see him retire. Confident of success, she despised what she called his croakings, for, to her imagination, it seemed altogether impossible that Alfred or Ada would be so blind to their own individual advantage, as to refuse uniting their estates by marriage; whether love had any thing to do with the alliance or not, was a matter of no importance to her, who considered all earthly happiness comprised in ancestry, power, and wealth.

While the earl of Vandeleur, with resentment rankling at his heart, was introducing his heir to his guests in the drawing-room, the countess was engaged in a conversation with the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, to whom she openly avowed her expectation, that a marriage would shortly take place between Lord Conway and Miss Lambart.

Mrs. Chatterton, though never before admitted to the confidence of the countess on this momentous subject, had been long

aware of her secret wishes and intentions; she had observed her address in extracting from the artless unsuspecting Miss Lambert, her opinion of, not only the present visitors at the castle, but of all the gentlemen of her acquaintance, and her cunning manœuvring to keep her apart from those she considered likely to make a favourable impression; all this had been silently remarked by Mrs. Chatterton; but now, when the countess spoke of the alliance as certain to take place between her son and niece, she received the intelligence in a way so extremely different from the usual warmth of her manner, that the countess was astonished; and in spite of her self-possession, could not refrain from remarking her indifference upon a matter of such consequence to herself and the earl.—“You do not seem to participate in my joyful feelings,” said she; “you neither offer me congratulations nor good wishes; do you not think it a very proper and desirable match?”

“Undoubtedly—to be sure,” replied Mrs. Chatterton, roused by the tone of voice in which the countess addressed her,

from the unpleasant, ~~je~~erie into which she had fallen—"a most desirable and proper match, certainly, if it can be brought about—if no obstacles should arise to prevent—if——"

"A truce with these everlasting ifs, I entreat," interrupted the countess; "I always detested those two little disagreeable words, but and if. What obstacles can possibly arise to set aside a match that has the earl and countess of Vandeleur's perfect approbation and concurrence? Are they not both young, both handsome, both rich, and of high birth? What should prevent a marriage between lord Conway and Miss Lambart?"

"I am sure I can have no idea," replied Mrs. Chatterton, not at all liking the close interrogation of the countess; "only it is just possible the parties themselves may object. Are you quite certain, my dear countess, that lord Conway and Miss Lambart are perfectly agreeable?"

"I am quite certain that they are neither of them fools," returned the countess, pettishly; "but it is evident you appear to doubt the accomplishment of this alliance.

Pray," fixing a scrutinizing look on the face of her dear friend—"pray, Mrs. Chatterton, can you assign any reason for supposing my wishes will be frustrated, and that the match will not take place?"

Mrs. Chatterton coloured through her rouge.—"Me assign a reason! Bless my soul!" exclaimed she, "what reason can I have? No, upon my honour and veracity, which you can have no reason to suspect, lord Conway never made a confidant of me: and as to Miss Lambart, you very well know, countess, she is so very reserved, that——"

"Believe me, I did not suspect they had either of them reposed their secrets with you," said the countess: "my mind acquits them of any such weakness; but I must request, if you consider my friendship of any value, that you will tell me, on your word of honour, whether you know, or have heard, of any Italian or French woman, who, with the charm of beauty or wit, may have fascinated and entangled lord Conway in a snare he cannot break, to whom he may fancy himself bound in honour."

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton solemnly protested she had never heard of any foreigner who had engaged the attention of lord Conway; then affecting to weep, she added—"I flattered myself, countess, you had a better opinion of my principles, than to suppose I——"

"You must pardon, and make allowance for my maternal solicitude," interrupted the countess.

"I am sure," resumed Mrs. Chatterton, "lord Conway's heart appeared, from all I ever observed, to be perfectly free."

"He may have disposed of his heart according to his pleasure," returned the countess, "so he has but kept his hand unfettered. Miss Lambart's wealth will extend the power and increase the popularity of the future earl of Vandeleur; and the coronet of a countess will confer dignity and consequence on her, who, at present, is inclined to think more humbly of her person and merits than is consistent with her rank in life."

The dinner-bell was at that moment a most joyful sound to Mrs. Chatterton, who certainly had suspicions of lord Conway's

entanglements, that she was extremely averse to disclose to his imperious mother, from whose penetrating eye and artful questioning she was glad to escape; and the little time there remained for the duties of the toilet, furnished her with a sufficient excuse for hurrying away.

The more the countess of Vandeleur reflected on the replies made by the honourable Mrs. Chatterton to her interrogations, respecting lord Conway's foreign gallantries, the less she was satisfied, for they sounded altogether evasive.—“But what,” thought the countess, “what could I expect from a woman of plebeian caste? When did honour or integrity belong to low birth? But if I discover any mean deceit—if I find she has concealed any of Alfred's liaisons, she forfeits my countenance, and the gates of the countess of Vandeleur shall be closed against her forever. Lord Conway believes himself firm and determined; but wary as he may be, I will wind myself into his secrets—I will convince him——”

“Dinner is served, my lady,” said Mrs.

Blandy, "and the earl is wondering what can detain you."

"Let him wonder," replied the countess, placing a splendid diamond brooch in the rich Dresden lace that shaded her bosom; "I must be an extraordinary and truly exemplary wife indeed, if, in all the years we have lived together, I have never till now given him cause for amazement."

Mrs. Blandy suppressed the laugh she felt inclined to indulge, for she had often witnessed the earl's astonishment at his lady's caprices and temper. But Mrs. Blandy was a sensible woman; her situation was a very good one, and she kept her eyes and her tongue in proper subjection.

The countess of Vandeleur descended to the *salle à manger*, in all the borrowed bloom and adornments of supreme fashion; as her eye glanced on her lord, she perceived that his brow was still clouded, and that he appeared displeased with the place his son had taken at table, between Miss Obrien and lady Mazarina Macnamara, who both seemed proud of, and delighted with, his attentions. On Miss Lambart,

who occupied a seat opposite him, he seldom bestowed even a glance of his lustrous eyes; and the countess fancied there was an expression of unusual pensiveness and restraint in the look and manner of her niece, which she erroneously attributed to pique, at Alfred having chosen a seat so far apart from her, and lavishing his smiles and regards on persons so every way inferior to herself. But in the pure and gentle mind of Ada, there was neither pique nor envy; she was contrasting the tranquillity of Lisburn Abbey, and regular disposal of hours there, with the ostentation, bustle, and waste of time at Doneraile Castle; she was wishing herself seated by the side of the venerable baroness in the oak parlour, and listening to her wild, romantic, and chivalrous anecdotes of the olden time, when enthusiasm, valour, and patriotism, withstood the horrors and evils of war, pestilence, and famine, and virtuous affection and patient endurance made heroines of the gentle, weak, and timid.

“If Ada was not impressed in favour of lord Conway,” thought his exulting mo-

ther, "she would be indifferent to his present flirtation; and if Alfred had no predilection for his cousin, he would not put on that air of *enjouissance*." These ideas, so flattering to her ambition, acted like a charm on the spirits of lady Vandeleur, and made her more than ever affable and condescending.

The baroness Ormsby seemed the most discontented person at table, for chance had placed her next to the countess of Drogheda, whom she despised for being low-born, and mortally hated because she had impertinently presumed to comment on the magnitude of her person; but not at all awed by her look of disdain, the little countess, on hearing her complain of want of appetite, advised her to fetch a long walk early in the morning, which would be after giving her a stomach, and would help to pull down her fat, which, it was easy to perceive, must be monstrous burdensome and disagreeable.

The baroness looked the contempt she was not allowed to utter, for lady Drogheda continued to advise her to put herself upon a regimen, leave off eating animal

food altogether, and live upon vegetables, as major Foggerty, of the forty-ninth, had done.—“The man was as big as a tun, through indulging in what people call the pleasures of the table,” said lady Drogheda; “but faith, all the pleasure turned to pain, sure; the major had the bile and the gout, and he could not walk for the swelling of his legs, nor talk for the shortness of his breath; so when he found he could not gormandize any longer and live, he consented to follow the directions of doctor Macfarley—a jewel of a man is that same Macfarley—and he kept the major upon short allowance, upon vegetables, whey, and rice, till he reduced him to a reasonable size; and though you are such a mountain of flesh,” continued she, “the same course would make you as slim as I am, and I look like a shrimp beside you; I would venture a wager one of your arms would weigh as much as my whole body.”

The enraged baroness could endure no more; she was about to express her displeasure at these rude observations; but in her haste to swallow the delicious *ragoût melleé*, with which her mouth was filled,

it stuck in her throat, and she was nearly strangled. Seeing her gasping and struggling, lady Drogheda gave her some hearty thumps on the back, observing—"Faith now, this comes of indulging in the pleasures of the table; she is just clean choked alive! the poor creature is black in the face!" Lady Stella Savage left her seat in alarm, and entreated that the baroness might be removed to another apartment; the gentlemen looked at the baroness, and thought it required the strength of Hercules to remove her; the servants in waiting stared and stood aloof, thinking it would take a dozen men, at least, to carry her from the room.

There was now general confusion at the table; Miss O'Brien protested the baroness was a most disgusting object, and in unqualified terms declared her abhorrence of gross feeders.

Lady Drogheda said—"Such a sudden death would be shocking; but she had no notion of the poor creature recovering, for she was choked with her own fat."

"Faith, honey!" said the earl of Drogheda, "it will not do much credit to our

humanity, if we let her die, without trying to preserve her life." He then seized one of the arms of the baroness, and with the assistance of lady Stella and his wife, led, or more properly dragged her, into the next apartment, where, throwing up a window, and placing her near it, he began shaking her with so much earnestness, that large drops of perspiration stood on his forehead.

"Air and exercise, Macfarley used to say, will effect wonders," said lord Drogheda; "and, by St. Patrick, he spoke the truth! I knew shaking her well would dislodge the enemy;" and so it did; for with eyes almost starting from their sockets, and horrible contortions of countenance, the baroness gave back the *ragoût melle*.

Lady Drogheda left the room, to report the recovery of the baroness, who, the moment she could articulate, exclaimed—
"Monster! do you intend to murder me?"

"The poor ould soul is not sensible yet," said Drogheda, again shaking her.

"Will no one come to my assistance?" screamed the baroness; "will no one res-

cue a helpless woman from the hands of this ruffian, who, with his scarecrow of a wife, has conspired to murder me?"

"Faith, now, if I did not know your head is not right, I should be after taking offence at your speech," said the kind-hearted Drogheda; "for have not I made myself as hot as ever I was on a march in India, in routing the enemy out of your gullet, besides the losing of my dinner, which I was just hungry enough to relish?"

"And you," resumed the baroness, glaring spitefully at lady Stella, who stood pale with terror beside her—"you to stand by, and see me so inhumanly treated!—you, who owe so much to my generosity and kindness, to suffer me to be used with such barbarity—to allow my weak frame to be shook and beat to a jelly."

"Indeed, my dear aunt," replied lady Stella, "you accuse me without reason, and complain unjustly of the means which, though painful, have, I firmly believe, preserved your life."

"No, I can never recover," said the baroness; "and you are accessory to my murder. You had no wish that I should

live; and have connived, if not assisted, to destroy me, vile ungrateful creature! I am bruised from my head to my feet; all my joints are dislocated; I shall have a fit of sickness, I am certain, for I feel it coming on; and if I die, you will find to your cost what it is to lose a generous benefactress."

"Och, botheration!" rejoined Drogheda, "you are not so near death, by the distance of a long day's march, as you were half-an-hour ago; but, faith now, without joking, a fit of sickness might be of rael sarvice to you, if it was only to reduce you to a more sizeable shape; and, sure now, it would lighten your weight, and make you less troublesome to carry to your long home."

"Oh that I had never left my own home!" said the baroness; "I little suspected, when I accepted an invitation to Doneraile Castle, I was to be associated with the *canaille*, and insulted by a low-born, mean-bred——"

"Dear madam," interrupted lady Stella, "consider the consequence of discomposing

your spirits. Pray let me assist you to your chamber, where an hour's repose may, and I trust will, allay the agitation of your nerves."

"Do not make yourself uneasy, jewel," said Drogheda, "at what the ould lady may be after saying to me. Sure it is the truth, and I am not ashamed to own it. My father was an honest weaver, if that she calls being low-born; and he did his best to make me a weaver, if that is being mean-bred; but I preferred the music of trumpet, drum, and fife, to the noise of the loom, and the rattle of the shuttle. I was but a boy when I left home and listed for a soldier; and somehow, for I mortally hate to boast, I rose from the ranks to be a general; and the king, God bless his gracious majesty! overrating my sarvites, made me an earl; and to speak the honest truth, my lady, I had rather be the founder than the inheritor of a name."

Lady Stella smiled approval of his sentiments. The baroness contemptuously pointed to the door; but this did not prevent the good-natured Drogheda from of-

fering to assist her up stairs, which she haughtily and peremptorily declined; and the arduous and difficult task devolved on lady Stella, who having seen her undressed and put to bed, was ordered by the baroness to prepare for their return home; and to inform the countess of Vandeleur, whom to her dying day she never would forgive, for associating her with those low, vulgar Droghedas, that ill and bruised as she was, it was her intention to quit Doneraile Castle the following day.

This hasty resolve of the offended baroness was intelligence of a very pleasing nature to sir Philip Egerton, for he had obtained from lady Stella, whose dependent situation became every hour more irksome, permission to solicit the consent of the baroness Ormsby to their marriage, and her promise to give him her hand immediately, whether the baroness approved or not. Making colonel Lismore the confidant of his matrimonial intention, sir Philip took advantage of a letter received from his steward, to plead unexpected and indispensable business; and set off some hours before the baroness was stirring, to

prepare his friend and relation, lady Munster, to afford countenance and protection to lady Stella, in the event of her being discarded by the baroness, whose revengeful temper rendered such procedure very likely, in his opinion, to happen.

The departure of the baroness Ormsby was rather desired than regretted by the countess Vandeleur, who, greatly as she estimated high birth, could not avoid discovering that rank, wealth, and a long line of noble ancestry, did by no means exempt the baroness Ormsby from being a most disagreeable, troublesome old woman, without the shadow of pretension to wit, taste, or elegance; besides, the influence of the earl of Drogheda, at that particular crisis extremely popular among his countrymen, was of the utmost consequence to the political interest of the earl of Vandeleur; and she had been not a little apprehensive, that the very marked disdain with which the baroness invariably treated his vulgar and obtrusive wife, would occasion offence, and hurry the Droghedas away from the castle, which

just then would have been unfortunate and disappointing.

Miss Lambart parted from lady Stella with unfeigned regrèt, and a faithful promise of renewing their intimacy, whenever the opportunity sincerely wished on, both sides offered.

In lady Stella, Miss Lambart had found a sensible and agreeable companion, one who neither flattered nor professed, one who, though poor and dependant, was neither mean nor servile; and among the present guests at the castle, she could not supply her loss; but informed of her engagement with sir Philip Egerton, and the happy change about to take place in her circumstances and situation, Ada silenced her own selfish regrets, and rejoiced in the bright and happy prospects of her deserving friend.

Lady Indiana Corry's disposition was sweet and amiable; but the little she had mixed in society, together with her very defective education, rendered her mind incapable of the reflection and solid reasoning which had distinguished and rendered the conversation of lady Stella

so attractive and agreeable to Miss Lambart : nor did many days pass, before she had other and greater cause to regret the absence of her favourite friend. In the presence of his parents and their guests, lord Conway behaved to her with undeviating politeness, but without the slightest tincture of affection : when she sung, he coldly approved ; if her beauty was spoken of, he betrayed no admiration ; if they walked, he offered his arm to any one except Ada ; his behaviour to her was always that of perfect indifference : but if by any chance he found her alone, which sometimes happened, in spite of all her caution to avoid a private interview, his look, his manner, his conversation, all underwent a change, to her strange, offensive, and disagreeable ; instead of being distantly polite, he became impassioned, and vehement protestations of love burst from his lips, which not all her displeasure and reserve could restrain. Sometimes he would call her prude, and swear her indifference was assumed ; that he was convinced she loved him, though she affected to tear her hand from his grasp,

and persisted in denying his lips the delight of pressing it—"But mine, Ada, mine you must be—shall be," he would say, fixing his flashing eyes upon her, in a way that made her shudder; "yes, I swear, mine you shall be, in spite of the—I might have been happy, if art, damnable art, had not been exerted to persuade me—but the obstacle can be, shall be removed—you shall yet be mine!"

When almost fainting with unavailing efforts to release her hand from his grasp, Ada would entreat him to release her, he would endeavour to extort from her a confession that she loved him, and a promise that she would never bestow her heart or her hand on another.

It was at one of these unpleasant interviews, that Ada so far overcome her terror, as to declare to the mortified lord Conway, that his vanity deceived him, for she never had, and was most certain never should feel, a partiality for him, whose conduct, deceitful as it was inexplicable, only raised in her displeasure and contempt.—"Love," continued Miss Lambert, "so circumspect, so regulated by

circumstance and occasion as yours, my lord, I consider as a mere jest; but as I am by no means inclined to favour the joke, I request, nay, I insist, it may never again be repeated."

Not expecting this exertion of spirit, Alfred was so astonished, that she had gained her dressing-room before he recovered sufficiently from his surprise and mortification, to curse his folly for having let her depart, before she had again heard him swear, that neither hatred nor resistance on her part should prevent the accomplishment of his wishes.

Ada, having relieved her agitated spirits by weeping, resolved on complaining to the countess of the persecution she suffered from lord Conway; but recollecting certain hints lately dropped by lady Vandeleur, respecting the vast importance both parties would derive from blending the Vandeleur and Lambart estates into one, and with what doating fondness she extenuated and glossed over the errors of her son, she gave up the idea of seeking redress from so partial a judge, and determined on writing to the baroness Wan-

desford, a true statement of her most distressing situation, and entreating her to lose no time in removing her, from what she could not consider other than degrading professions, being always made in private, and which were to her most disagreeable and offensive.—“ Lord Conway’s disposition and mind,” thought Ada, “ are hateful to me ; and as to those terrible eyes of his, Miss Obrien may think them beautiful, but to me they are horrible, and I long to be removed from their withering influence.”

The next morning, Miss Lambart was fated to discover much more of lord Conway’s duplicity ; for having yielded to the wishes of the countess of Drogheda and her daughter, she had consented to go with them to a shrubbery, at a short distance from the castle, to see a tulip-tree, that had been lately imported from America, and which was then covered with rich scarlet and yellow flowers. Having sufficiently admired the majestic height of the tree, the magnitude of its trunk, and declared the tulips were as large, and as handsome, and looked quite as shewy as

any she had seen growing in beds in gardens, lady Drogheda turned from the lofty tulip-tree towards a temple, that terminated the path they were then pursuing, observing, that though, great thanks to saint Patrick, she was not so bloated and burdened with fat as the poor unwieldy creature, baroness Ormsby, whom she pitied, with all her soul, for being so haughty and proud of her progenitors, who were nothing at all, sure, better than dust and ashes, as much as she did for being so monstrous overgrown and fat—"Poor ould soul!" said she, "I would not be her size for all her money; yet, for all that, thin folks may not be good walkers, no more than their neighbours, that have more flesh to carry about; and I, that am nothing to speak of but skin and bone, I feel tired. Ay, Indy, my jewel, you may stare! but, in rael earnest, I am tired. When I was abroad, in Ingee, I was always kept in such full employment, marching here and scirmidging there, that I had no time at all, sure, to think about being tired; but here, in Ireland, I have nothing to do, at all at all, and it quite

and clean makes an alteration ; and sure my ankles are after taking advantage of the idle life I am leading, and are just being so impertinent as to be weary and uneasy ; and now, Miss Lambart, I must beg leave to sit down for a few minutes in this temple. Indy, darling, where are you running ?”

“ To open the door for you,” replied lady Indiana.

But the door was fastened on the inside, and as she pushed against it, the sharp bark of Miss O'Brien's Don Carlos was recognised by the astonished trio, mingled with the deeper tones of a spaniel belonging to lord Conway.

Miss Lambart drew back, and would have persuaded the countess of Drogheda to pursue her way to the castle ; but she persisted in resting herself before she proceeded ; she then knocked smartly at the door of the temple, but receiving no answer, she applied her eye to the keyhole. —“ Well, to be sure,” exclaimed she, “ I never once thought of seeing them shut up together !”

“ Who ? ” asked lady Indiana ; “ do, mamma, let me have a peep.”

“ It was only yesterday,” said lady Drogheda, “ I heard lord Conway tell colonel Lismore, that Miss Obrien was an artful, affected coquette, and that from his soul he detested her; and, upon my faith now, here they are, shut up together, love-making, for his arm was round her waist, and her head leaning upon his shoulder : well, if any body had told me this, I would not have believed it, but sure I must give credit to my own eyesight. This is being fashionable, ‘ I suppose,” continued lady Drogheda ; “ but I am very glad lord Conway is not my son ; for if he was, I should tell him to speak the truth and shame the devil. But if I was to inform the countess Vandeleur of the affair, she would only laugh, and say something in French to excuse him ; and as to Mrs. Chatterton, it is plain to see she has no sort of control over Miss Obrien’s actions ; so I suppose, as I should do no good by interfering, I may as well be after keeping my tongue between my teeth.”

Miss Lambart advised that no sort of

notice should be taken of the discovery they had made.

Lady Drogheda declared herself very glad that lord Conway had not taken a fancy to her Indy, for he had such a bold haughty manner with him, and such a rude wicked way of staring with his eyes, that she should never have brought herself to like him for a son-in-law—"But I beg your pardon, Miss Lambart, I quite forgot to remember that lord Conway is your relation."

"That circumstance does not blind me, madam," replied Ada, "to lord Conway's faults."

"No, I dare say not," resumed lady Drogheda; "and he has enough of them, and to spare, if all that is said of him is true; but sure I quite forget I promised to keep my tongue between my teeth, and perhaps I have been after doing a sight of mischief, by speaking of lord Conway in this slighting way; for now I remember, the earl of Drogheda, my husband, told me lord Conway was to marry you, Miss Lambart, as soon as he came of age; and

that you had been engaged to each other ever since you were children."

"I beg to assure you, madam," said Ada, "the earl's information is, from first to last, incorrect—lord Conway was never proposed to me; and if he had, I should have rejected an alliance I never can approve, and which I am certain, from the dissimilarity of our tempers and way of thinking, could only be productive of misery to me, whatever ease his lordship might derive from the principles he is at no pains to conceal."

Having gained the castle, the ladies separated; and as Ada was arranging the flowers that ornamented the balcony of her dressing-room, she saw Miss O'Brien and lord Conway walking leisurely towards the castle, seemingly indifferent to the observation they might fall under, or the construction that might be put on their conduct.

At breakfast, to the great relief of Ada, neither Miss O'Brien nor lord Conway appeared; and had her mind been at ease, she would have been amused by the conduct of lady Mazarina Macnamara and

general Forbes, who tried his possible to appear a youthful lover, while she affected to receive his attentions with the bashfulness of a girl of sixteen; but scarcely were the breakfast-things removed, and the general and lady Mazarina withdrawn, than a scene of such confusion took place, that Miss Lambart was glad to fly for refuge to the quiet of her own apartment. Miss Forbes, who had during breakfast silently watched the conduct of her father and lady Mazarina, began pulling her intended mamma to pieces without mercy, as soon as she was certain she was out of hearing.

Annabella defended the absent with much apparent sincerity, saying, she had no doubt but she would make their papa very happy.

“ You know you are telling a most abominable story,” replied Miss Forbes, observing that Mrs. Chatterton and lady Drogheda were staring at her; “ but I will speak my mind if I die for it: lady Mazarina has no hopes of getting a younger or a richer husband, and so she has flattered papa by telling him how young he looks, and that people might believe he

was our brother, but nobody would credit we were his daughters—only think how artful and wicked!”

Lady Drogheda said, it was possible the general might pay lady Mazarina some little attention out of friendship, without intending to marry her.

“ But he does intend to marry her, to make that mix a stepmother over us—only think how shocking!” sobbed Miss Forbes; “ and Annabella, that looks so demure, and pretends to deny, heard them agree to be married, as soon as the settlements were ready.”

“ I did not say so,” replied Annabella; “ and if I did, papa has a right to please himself.”

“ No, he has not a right to set a stepmother over me,” said Miss Forbes.

“ You dare not tell him so,” resumed Annabella.

This assertion increased the rage of Miss Forbes so much, that from words the contention would have risen to blows, but for the interposition of lady Drogheda, who, though a pigmy compared with the grenadier figure of Miss Forbes, forcibly held

her down in a chair, till her fury melted away in tears.

Annabella Forbes, by nature more artful than her sister, affected to be pleased that her father had selected lady Mazarina Macnamara for a wife; for though dull of intellect, she had tact enough to know that clever people took advantage of the follies of others; and having discovered that lady Mazarina thought highly of her own face and figure, she hoped, by sacrificing largely at the shrine of her vanity, to obtain many indulgencies in visiting public amusements, and in dress, that were at present denied, or very sparingly granted by the general.

Having, in a paroxysm of folly, made lady Mazarina Macnamara an offer of marriage, which she, with much affected modesty, had accepted, the general was too proud of the youth and beauty of his bride-elect, to make a secret of his happiness; and he lost no time in admonishing his daughters to pay a respectful and ready obedience to the wishes and commands of their future mamma.

Miss Forbes listened in sullen silence

to the commands of her father, while Anabella congratulating the general on his choice, declared she was delighted at the thought of calling lady Mazarina mother, and promised a faithful observance of his injunctions; but Miss Forbes, who attached tyranny, oppression, and privation, to the name of stepmother, scarcely let the door close on her father, before she burst into revilings of lady Mazarina, whom she called a spiteful old maid, and a painted jezebel. Mrs. Chatterton and the countess Drogheda took pains to persuade her to bear patiently the evil she had not the power to remedy; but Miss Forbes was not to be pacified; she called her sister a sly deceitful hypocrite, and vowed she would contrive to be a thorn in the side of her stepmother.

The ill-concealed hostility of Miss Forbes did not escape the observance of lady Mazarina; and the week after the public announcement of their intended marriage, general Forbes made his *congé* at Doneraile Castle; and conforming to the suggestion of his intended bride, without giving his daughters a hint of their destina-

tion, he placed them under the *surveillance* and management of their dreaded and hated aunt Mahon, who promised the general that she would be particularly careful of their morals, and make them constantly read the Bible.

When the countess Vandeleur was informed of the settlements being in preparation for the marriage of lady Mazarina Macnamara, she said—"I have predicted her destiny in this life—she will *'wither on the virgin thorn.'*" And it may be as well to conclude the history of lady Mazarina here. She left Doneraile Castle in a few days after the departure of the general, and returned home, to disturb the learned reveries of her sisters with her nuptial preparations; but it was written in the book of fate that she was to die unwedded, for general Forbes caught cold at a review, became seriously ill, and provokingly quitted life, before the conjugal knot was tied. Alas! poor lady Mazarina Macnamara! though she rouged, dressed, and danced, as pertinaciously as ever, she never could prevail on another gentleman,

young or old, to make her an offer, but had the mortification to see the general's gawky daughters well established in life, while she, *malgré* all her efforts, continued to reside with her sisters, not, like them, content with celibacy, "but a disappointed fretful old maid.

The countess of Vandeleur, though she had never expressed her disapprobation, was by no means pleased with the conduct of her son; whose absolute indifference to Miss Lambart seemed every day to increase; while the bold affected Miss O'Brien engaged much more of his time and attention than she thought politeness demanded.

The earl of Vandeleur's forbearance was nearly worn out, and he was for explaining his views and expectations, without any farther delay, to lord Conway, and laying parental command upon him to pay those attentions to his cousin which were so ill-placed, and idly lavished, on Miss O'Brien, who, it was evident to him, was artfully trying to secure the boy's undivided admiration and regard.

"Alfred lord Conway," replied the countess, with *hauteur*, "may admire the girl,

for any thing I know, or care, and she may dance, and sing, and ogle, and faint, to amuse herself and him ; but depend upon it, though he appears interested, and apparently yields himself to her whims, it is only *pour passer le temps* ; our son has more sense and discrimination, more genuine taste, than to be caught in her web, though ever so cunningly wove : he knows the extent of Miss Obrien's fortune—a paltry fifteen thousand pounds !—Of what service would so trifling a sum be to him, to whom wealth is necessary for the support of his rank, and the indulgence of his expensive habits ? No, no, I ridicule the idea ; I have no fear that the fascinations of Miss Obrien will have any serious or permanent influence on the actions of lord Conway, or in any way interfere with our views.”

The earl of Vandeleur was not then to learn how obstinately the countess on all occasions adhered to her own opinions, and that contradiction, though it never produced conviction, never failed to disturb and irritate her not very placid temper ; he therefore let any further avowal of his

dislike of Miss Obriën pass, and said he was concerned to remark a great change in Miss Lambart; neither her spirits nor her appetite were good.—“In fact,” continued the earl, “she looks pale and ill; and as I have always a dread of consumption, I think it would be proper, Alicia, to inquire into her malady——”

“*De cœur*,” said the countess, “for there her sickness lies, depend upon it; I am more wary and clear-sighted, be assured, my dear lord, than to suffer Miss Lambart’s looks to escape without my investigation: the poor child is fully sensible of the graces, the elegant and attractive *agremens* of lord Conway, and her vanity—for she has vanity, as well as the rest of her sex—is offended, to think that he alone, of all the young men to whom she has been introduced, should view her person with indifference, and treat her with unvarying coldness.”

“To say the truth,” replied the earl, “she has reason to be offended; his cold politeness is as bad as downright rudeness; and if Alfred denies her claim to beauty, if he withholds from her his respect, his

warm admiration, he must be destitute of taste and feeling, insensible to——”

“Hold there, for I am certain you accuse him wrongfully,” said the countess. “My life upon it, Alfred is not so tasteless or insensible, as not to prefer Ada to any female he has seen; his indifference, without doubt, is assumed—a cunningly devised *ruse d’amour*, to discover the sentiments of his *belle cousin*; once convinced that she regards him with favour, he will throw the mask of indifference aside, and with real feeling and passion, solicit her affection and her hand.”

“This sounds very pretty and romantic,” returned the earl; “but I hate every thing that savours of stratagem and romance; and if the poor girl really likes him, how long is she to be teased and tantalized with his whims, before he condescends to assure her of his regard?”

“How long? really you ask me a question I am not competent to answer. You know,” said the countess, “I am not in lord Conway’s confidence.”

“He shall very shortly be in mine,” returned the earl.

“ Surely you do not mean,” said the countess, “ after promising to wait patiently——”

“ My patience,” interrupted the earl, “ is exhausted; you know I was a long time before I could reconcile myself to the idea of my son, marrying a heretic; and after having overcome my scruples, to see him thus wilfully reject wealth and beauty, it is past sufferance. I can no longer be patient, and will assert the rightful authority of a parent. He shall account to me for his conduct: he shall yield to my will, or find, that while I exist, I have it in my power to reduce him to a style of living very different to his present splendour.”

Perceiving the earl resolutely bent on demanding an explanation from his son, and insisting on his obedience, the countess entreated that he would first allow her to interrogate Miss Lambart on the state of her affections.

“ Certainly, that will be proper; for who knows how far the perversity of her sex may lead her offended pride,” observed the earl, “ may induce her to refuse him, and

there is no compelling her consent; in her particular case, we can only use persuasion; and if that fails—and I feel that I shall be disappointed in uniting the Lambart estates to those annexed to the earldom of Vandeleur—yes, yes, I see our long-cherished scheme will be crushed; it will fall to nothing.”

“ But why anticipate disappointment ?” asked the countess: “ suffer me to draw from Miss Lambart and lord Constay their sentiments of each other; promise me you will wait my report, before you lay any commands on your son.”

The earl thought it high time to bring matters to a certainty; but the countess urged him so earnestly, that she at last wrung from him a reluctant promise, that he would be silent another month, and give her that short period to acquaint herself with the state of Miss Lambart’s feelings, and obtain from her son a confession of his views and intentions.”

The next morning brought new guests, to the great relief of the countess Vandeleur, who was actually ennuied with see-

ing the same faces, and hearing the same voices every day. The honourable Mrs. Carleton and Miss Belmore came to fulfil an engagement made with the countess some months before, at Dublin. The large fortune of Miss Belmore would have rendered her an object of great interest to most gentlemen, had she been a plain girl; but she was generally thought handsome: she was rather above the middle height, well formed and graceful; her complexion was scarcely dark enough to be called brunette; her hair, glossy and redundant, was of the darkest shade of brown; and her eyes, of the oriental form, large, intelligent, and sparkling.

Mrs. Carleton had been pretty in her youth, and she still retained a genteel figure, white teeth, and an abundance of good-nature. Sir Harry Ogle having danced with Miss Belmore at a ball, and afterwards met her at a rout, where Mrs. Carleton accepted his services to conduct them to their carriage, believed it a point of politeness to call at their house, and make inquiries after their health. The little fop, being, a few times admitted

among other morning visitors, had the vanity to believe that Miss Belmore beheld him with an eye of regard. Having learned that business called Mr. Carleton to England, and that his wife and Miss Belmore were to pass the period of his absence at Doneraile Castle, he determined to avail himself of what he called an invitation from lord Conway, to visit him when he returned to Ireland, which was nothing more pressing than—"If you should ever be in the vicinity of Doneraile Castle, give me a call."

Sir Harry Ogle remembered that he had thought Miss Lambart very desirable, but prodigiously shy and reserved—amazing fine fortune, and all that sort of thing; but Miss Belmore was more to his taste—animated and fashionable; but at Doneraile Castle, placed beside each other, he should have a fair opportunity to decide between them; and if Miss Belmore, by whom he fancied himself most attracted, should lose by the comparison, why, he should be on the spot, ready to perceive and take advantage of any partiality Miss Lambart might betray for his person; and

her immense wealth would infallibly heal the wounds inflicted by the bright eyes of Miss Belmore. So thought sir Harry Ogle; and impressed with a belief, that at Doneraile Castle, he should obtain a bride and affluence, he offered his services to escort the ladies, which they accepted, looking upon sir Harry Ogle as an inoffensive little coxcomb; in whose empty head, if there was little sense, there was certainly ~~les~~ little capability of plotting evil.

Miss Lambart remembered to have heard the baroness Wandesford speak of the honourable Mrs. Carleton in terms of respect, and of Miss Belmore, as a young woman whom wealth and fashionable society had not corrupted; and to Ada, their arrival gave pleasure; for the countenance of Miss Belmore spoke a sensible mind, and gave the promise, that in her she should meet a rational companion, who, if her conversation was not equally entertaining as lady Stella's, would contribute to render time less tedious.—“ And here at Doneraile Castle, to me,” thought Ada, “ time seems to move on leaden wings.”

Lord Conway, though he secretly de-

spised the weak intellects and frivolity of sir Harry Ogle, was not displeased with his visit; for colonel Lismore being a man of honourable principles, and known bravery, was not calculated to become his friend, or to be made his dupe; but the witless fop, sir Harry, might be of service, if it was only to relieve him from the task of flattering Miss O'Brien, who was *exigante au dernier degré* of his attentions and compliments.

Miss Belmore and Miss O'Brien had met before, and when the customary greetings passed between the young ladies, every person present, with the exception of the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, believed Miss O'Brien sincere, when she declared herself happy to renew her acquaintance with Miss Belmore.

Sir Harry Ogle had often seen lord Conway and Miss O'Brien walking and riding together at Paris; and perceiving that the same good understanding continued between them at Doneraile Castle, he conceived it would facilitate his own views, and aid the game he intended to play,

could he render himself agreeable to both parties.

Sir Harry Ogle had heard it frequently asserted at Paris, that lord Conway was ridiculously vain of his person, and had actually called out a German officer, for saying his figure was heavy and overgrown; and though but little given to observation, sir Harry had noticed that vanity was his lordship's foible; and no one could be an hour in Miss O'Brien's company, without perceiving the high estimation in which she held her own charms, and the infinite pains she took to display the elegant symmetry of her feet and ankles. It was by no means a task of difficulty to flatter persons so prepared by self-approval, to swallow compliments, however glaring and extravagant. The countess of Vandeleur, too, expected adulation; he had once heard her confession of—"I am *dans ma première jeunesse*;" yet it was evident she was unwilling to dispense with the *petits soins* bestowed on youthful females; and as she still enjoyed the éclat of being *recherché* in her establishment, her dress, and her *société*, he

determined, with her *pour faire l'amiable*, that he might not be banished from her *parties choisies* when at Dublin, as well as secure to himself an invitation to prolong his present visit.

Having arranged his plan for becoming a general favourite, sir Harry Ogle was ever on the watch for occasions to offer the adulatory speeches he had already prepared for delivery, which, on every trial, he found successful to his utmost wish; his flattery never failed to please, for lord Conway said he was an entertaining fellow; and Miss O'Brien rapped his knuckles with her fan, and called him an agreeable coxcomb; Miss Belmore often, and Miss Lambart sometimes, smiled and blushed at his compliments.

Sir Harry had passed near a month at the castle, and felt happy in the belief that he had rendered himself agreeable to the ladies and gentlemen, and particularly so to Miss Belmore, who had suffered him to tie her shoe-string, and had taught him to make card-puzzles—strong indications, in his opinion, of a growing preference, which he hoped to improve into love; for though

he acknowledged Miss Lambart was more beautiful than Miss Belmore, and much wealthier, yet she ~~was~~ not exactly suited to his taste, she was so reserved, so distant; and when Miss Belmore laughed at his *bon mots* and *jeu d'esprits*, she rarely gave even an approving smile; she seldom spoke to him, or looked at him—very mortifying to his conceit; but he set her down as *stupidé* and inanimate, and gave all his hopes and wishes to the more *spirituelle* Miss Belmore.

One morning, sir Harry Ogle observing lord Conway on the lawn, desired the ladies to look at him.

“What is he doing?” asked Mrs. Chatterton, advancing to the window; “is there any thing extraordinary to look at? Is he climbing the elm-tree after the bird’s-nest lady Indiana pointed out to him yesterday?”

“He would have the tree cut down, rather than be at the trouble of climbing it,” said Miss Obrien.

“I was not thinking of trees or birds’-nests,” resumed sir Harry; “I only designed to direct your attention to lord

Conway, who is the finest man in all Ireland."

"That is a bold assertion," rejoined the countess of Drogheda; "Ireland contains many fine men sure. Lord Conway is tall and well made, and carries his head upright; I dare say the earl of Drogheda, my husband, would like a regiment of soldiers as tall as him."

"In my opinion," resumed sir Harry, addressing Miss O'Brien, "lord Conway looks handsomer now than at the time when the duchesse Vitteroy and the countess Laval quarrelled about opening a ball with him; but if my memory is correct, *la belle veuve* obtained the envied distinction——"

"Of being ridiculed and laughed at by all her acquaintance," said Miss O'Brien; "I perfectly recollect the circumstance, poor silly *begueule*! but really, sir Harry Ogle, you astonish me."

"*Pourquoi, ma bella ange?*" asked sir Harry.

"You have ruined yourself for ever in my opinion, as a connoisseur in female beauty," replied Miss O'Brien; "believe

me, sir Harry, 'I shall never respect your taste again, after calling the dingy-looking comtesse Laval handsome.'

"*Pardonnez moi*," returned sir Harry, eager to correct the error he had committed; "I never, in my own particular, thought her more than *passablement bien*; her complexion had far too deep a tinge of olive for me, though I certainly have heard her admired."

"By lord Conway, I suppose," said Miss Obrien, with a sneer; "but there is nothing to wonder at if it was so, for men have strange tastes."

"It did not appear she was *à son goût*," replied sir Harry, "or he would have tried to prevent her marrying, and quitting Paris so suddenly; her husband, the baron Duminel, is particularly ugly, and old enough to be her father."

"*Sans doute* lord Conway was tired of the liaison," said Miss Obrien, "and advised her to avail herself of the baron's folly; and his being very rich, old, and ugly, were strong inducements to persuade her to marry him; the comtesse Laval was poor, her reputation not in *bon odeur*

and imperious necessity demanded the sacrifice of her inclinations, that she might retain her place in society, which *malgre* her rank, wealth could alone secure to her: many have played the game *convenience*, and found themselves gainers; and it matters very little, whether a husband be ugly or handsome, though, of the two, I think it better he should be the former, for in admiration of themselves, handsome men are apt to overlook the beauty of their wives."

"The man who has the superlative happiness to call you his wife," returned sir Harry, laying his hand affectedly on his heart, "can never forget to admire and adore your superlative beauty."

"You are a superlative flatterer," said Miss O'Brien, smiling, and displaying her embroidered stockings and pink satin slippers; "but your *des paroles de soie* have no effect on me, who set so little value on exterior charms."

"*Voila un agrement de plus !*" exclaimed sir Harry, gazing on her feet; "those taper ankles, those delicate feet, without the *lumiere du sentiment* you so eminent-

ly possess, would furnish theme for eternal admiration. I wish you would give me one of those exquisite little slippers."

"What possible use could you make of it," asked Miss Obrien, "if I was inclined to indulge your request?"

"Use!" repeated sir Harry; "I would not profane it by base appliances; no, I would preserve it as a matchless curiosity, unique, as much for its elegant form as its diminutive size."

"Like the glassen slipper of Cinderella," observed lady Indiana Corry, laughing; "but after all your compliments, sir Harry Ogle, it is not a curiosity, nor yet unique in size, for Miss Lambart's slippers, my mamma's, and my own, are smaller."

Miss Obrien drew in her feet, reddening with vexation, and longing to box lady Indiana's ears for her impertinent contradiction and remark; but looking incredulous, and smiling superciliously, she said, "Indeed! very possible!"

The honourable Mrs. Carleton, wishing to restore the good humour lady Indiana's remark had disturbed, directed the attention of Miss Obrien to lord Conway, by

saying, "According to the opinion you have expressed, it will be better lord Conway should remain unmarried; for in that graceful attitude, leaning against a tree, I think I never saw a more perfectly handsome man."

"His person is well formed," rejoined Miss Belmore, "and the contour of his head grand; but in my opinion, for I have no taste for demigods, he is too towering in height; his figure is altogether too large."

"Lord Conway is said to resemble the statues of Antinous," replied Miss O'Brien, "and he is not a little vain, I promise you, of his majestic height and commanding person; but mum on that subject, for here he comes, to display his godlike proportions."

Lord Conway was entering by the French window, when Don Carlos, suddenly disturbed, jumped from the Egyptienne couch, where he had reposed beside his mistress, and, with an angry snarl, fixed his sharp teeth in his lordship's ankle, who, naturally impatient and irascible, became so furious at the sight of his blood, and the smart inflicted by the bite, that he threw

the little animal with violence from the window, against a tree, where he lay quivering in the convulsions of death.

Miss O'Brien shrieked and fainted, but taking no notice of her, neither offering any apology to the ladies, who were pale with alarm, lord Conway uttered a volley of oaths.—“The cursed brute may be mad,” exclaimed he; “the poison may even now have entered my veins, and I may die of hydrophobia.” He then rushed from the apartment, ordering the dog to be shot, and the family physician and surgeon to be instantly sent for.

Miss O'Brien being revived by the volatiles applied to her nose and temples, protested, “Don Carlos was not mad, he was only ill-tempered, like the brute who threw him from the window; but lord Conway shall find—” Here she paused, and declaring herself quite ill, retired with the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, who looked even more discomposed than herself.

Sir Harry Ogle had followed lord Conway, with an intention of offering his services to ride off for the physician; and

the ladies were left by themselves, to comment on the outrageous conduct of lord Conway.

Miss Lambart had seen much of his lordship's violence before the present instance ; but Miss Belmore, who had never witnessed any thing like the fury he had evinced, lifting up her hands and eyes, prayed she might never again be present at such a scene.

" I shall never think lord Conway handsome again," said Mrs. Carleton.

" Indeed he looked frightful," rejoined lady Indiana.

" Faith now ! he looked worse than frightful," replied lady Drogheda ; " somebody, this morning, was after comparing him to a god, but, for my part, I think he is a great deal more like the devil."

The assurances of his medical attendants having convinced lord Conway that the dog was not mad, and that the bite on his ankle had a favourable appearance, and was not likely to be attended with serious consequences, either to his health or the symmetry of his leg, considered it proper to make apologies to the ladies for the fright

his violence had caused them; but while their *bienseance* accepted his excuses, their minds retained the unfavourable impression made by his execrations and distorted countenance.

The countess of Vandeleur was secretly glad that Don Carlos was dead, who had once or twice bit her favourite poodle; and while she affected great sorrow for Miss Obrien's indisposition, who kept her chamber for near a week, she made up her mind to believe that her illness was nothing more than affectation, a display of delicate nerves, artfully designed to interest the feelings of lord Conway, and excite his compunction for having terrified her into such a lamentable state of suffering, and induce him to propitiate her resentment for the loss of Don Carlos with some expensive trinket: but while the countess of Vandeleur, nearly as unfeeling as her son, thought lightly of Miss Obrien's illness, the honourable Mrs. Chatterton was almost wild with alarm, not altogether out of affectionate concern for the indisposition of her niece, but for herself, and the share she had to sustain in the storm which

she feared was impending, and which was likely to be of the utmost consequence to her future station in life. Trembling with apprehension, she saw all the favour she had so long enjoyed with the countess Vandeleur entirely ruined, through the unlucky *brouillerie* between lord Conway and her niece; she beheld herself left out of all the future routs, balls, and concerts, that would be given by the countess at Dublin, whither the family were to remove, as soon as their mansion, now fitting up with the utmost magnificence, was ready to receive them: the more Mrs. Chatterton reflected on the implacable and stubborn temper of her niece, the more she felt convinced, that through the detestable little beast, Don Carlos, she should be utterly excluded from the circles of *haut ton*, and discarded from *elite* society, have only the distressing alternative of retiring altogether from the amusements of the world, or to join the assemblies she had hitherto despised, composed of persons without rank, name, or consequence. To avoid this terrible and much-dreaded

evil, the honourable Mrs. Chatterton exerted all her eloquence to persuade her niece to make her indisposition an excuse for returning home, where she would enjoy quiet, and have more and better attendance than could be procured at Done-raile Castle.

But this Miss Obrien peremptorily refused, declaring that she would on no account be persuaded to remove from Done-raile Castle, because she knew lord Conway was anxious to have her gone, and she determined to remain, on purpose to annoy him and his haughty imperious mother, who had for some time beheld her with no approving eye.—“But I will convince the proud countess of Vandeleur, and her paragon of a son,” continued Miss Obrien, “that I am not to be offended, insulted, or neglected, with impunity. Not that I at all care for, or regret the loss of Don Carlos—quite the contrary; for the little ill-tempered brute was a perpetual torment to me; but lord Conway shall not exercise his savage propensities on any thing that belongs to me; I will teach him to respect——”

“ Dear Charlotte,” interrupted Mrs. Chatterton, “ how you rave! Pray do not exert yourself in this way, and speak so loud; the servants will hear and report.”

“ Let them report,” said Miss Obrien; “ I will speak as loud as I please. Lord Conway has had no respect for my feelings, and I will let him see that an offended woman——”

“ For Heaven’s sake, my dear Charlotte, be calm, for you really put me in fear for your life,” said Mrs. Chatterton, ready to weep at the obstinate resolve of Miss Obrien not to return home.

“ Be under no apprehension for me, I entreat you, madam,” said Miss Obrien; “ I am infinitely better to-day than I was yesterday; and pray do not fatigue yourself with attempting to persuade me out of my resolves, for as soon as I am able to descend to the drawing-room, I will assuredly have my revenge on lord Conway, by telling the countess of Vandeleur a secret, that shall make her ears tingle, and that in the presence of all her guests. The outrageous conduct of lord Conway to me

was public enough—I was not insensible to the sneers and inquiring looks of those who pretended to offer me assistance; but their curiosity shall be satisfied—they shall all be admitted to the participation of a secret, which, to oblige lord Cenway, has been hitherto kept inviolable.”

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton had not the least curiosity respecting this secret; perhaps her suspicion had glanced at it before. She had, however, no wish to be present at the menaced disclosure; she rather desired to be a hundred miles off when it was made; she knew, in the flaming cheek of Miss O'Brien, that offended pride was giving nerve to her resolves; and the honourable Mrs. Chatterton trembled at the idea, that she should be compelled, though much against her will, to witness some *événement très grand*, which she would gladly have escaped, even by a fit of sickness; and she was mentally debating whether it would not be the wisest plan she could adopt, to feign sickness—a sore throat and fever, of which she knew the countess Vandeleur was so afraid, that she would suffer her to depart without

seeing her: but before Mrs. Chatterton had quite settled her mind to this expedient, Mrs. Millefleur brought in a note from lord Conway, containing a request to be admitted to see Miss O'Brien. At first, the offended fair one vehemently persisted in refusing to see him; but Mrs. Chatterton, who saw the utility of gaining time by a reconciliation, so successfully urged and persuaded her, that she at last consented to grant him an interview the following morning in her dressing-room.

What was said at that interview remains undisclosed; but it appeared lord Conway's apology was accepted; for the next day Miss O'Brien appeared at dinner, and, to the great displeasure of the earl and countess of Vandeleur, Alfred was seated by her side, and as attentive as ever.

The month was gone by that the earl had allowed the countess to sound the affections of Ada and Alfred; but the time drawing near when the visit of the honourable Mrs. Chatterton and Miss O'Brien was to terminate, she persuaded her lord that it would be best to let them go, before she questioned Ada respecting her

feelings towards her cousin, or demanded from him what his real sentiments and intentions were in regard to Miss Obrien.

The earl was not disposed to acquiesce with this new arrangement; and without communicating his intention to the countess, had determined to interrogate his son the following morning; but being that night seized with a fit of the gout, he was obliged to postpone his designs, being fearful that the contradiction, refusal, and opposition, he expected to meet, would produce irritation, and drive the disorder to his stomach, or his head, either of which might cost him his life; and the earl of Vandeleur was not yet willing, or prepared, to resign the pomps and vanities of the world.

“ I wonder how Miss Obrien can bear to be so closely wrapped up in that immense shawl, this very warm day,” said the honourable Mrs. Carleton.

“ She is chilly perhaps, and fearful of taking cold after her illness,” replied Miss Lambart.

“ She has complained of not being well for some time past,” said lady Indiana

Corry, "and she does right to take care of herself, now she is a little better; for it would be a shocking thing if she was to go into a decline; and you know, mamma, sir Harry Ogle observed yesterday——"

"Sir Harry Ogle is next-door neighbour to a fool," interrupted lady Drogheda. "A decline! no, Ind'y, jewel; there is nothing of that sort. the matter with the young lady, I am sure and certain. Faith, if I have any judgment of her case, she is much more likely to increase than decline!"

"Certainly, you know best, mamma," replied Indiana; "but I heard colonel Lismore observe this morning, that she looked thin, and her nose was got sharp; and I thought it very unfeeling of lord Conway to laugh, because he seems to pay her so much attention; and he did not even affect to be sorry for her, but said, no doubt she would recover her good looks, for her disorder did not appear to be dangerous."

"Faith now, I believe lord Conway is quite right in his opinion," said lady Drogheda; "I am much mistaken if she is not getting fat."

“ Dear mamma, how can a person get fat, that eats so little, and complains of being unwell ? ”

“ She eats plenty of green trash,” replied lady Drogheda ; “ and I am pretty certain she will get rid of her complaint, before the apples are ripe she is so fond of eating, though they have no more taste than the tree on which they grow. I wonder her aunt, the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, does not notice the alteration in the——But, sure I have no business to be after making remarks, about what does not concern me at all ; though I am certain, if Miss O'Brien was any kin to me, I should be apt to insist upon her seeking after the only proper remedy in her case.”

“ And what is the remedy, mamma ? ” asked lady Indiana, with a *naïveté* that proved the purity of her thoughts and mind.

“ It is not becoming in a young girl like you to be so inquisitive, Indy,” replied lady Drogheda. “ There, mind your book, and give over asking questions, honey, about what you do not understand.”

Miss Belmore blushed, as she exchanged

looks with the honourable Mrs. Carleton; for lady Drogheda had awakened suspicions unfavourable to the virtue of Miss O'Brien; but Miss Lambart, equally unsuspicious as lady Indiana, wondered, if lady Drogheda knew a remedy for Miss O'Brien's complaint, she did not point it out, and advise her to try it immediately.

The young ladies having left the apartment to take a walk, Mrs. Carleton said—“ I cannot affect, lady Drogheda, to be ignorant of your meaning respecting Miss O'Brien's indisposition; I must confess I have observed an alteration in her person since I saw her at Dublin; but I am still unwilling to believe there is any thing incorrect in her conduct.”

“ As to Miss O'Brien's conduct,” replied lady Drogheda, “ I will take upon me to say, it is any thing but prudent; and I should be vastly sorry if my daughter, lady Indiana Corry, was to be after walking in her steps; and I am surprised the countess of Vandeleur, who is too particular by half, in some things, does not see the shameful intimacy between her son and Miss O'Brien: why, the other morn-

ing, I caught them locked up together in the temple, at the bottom of the new shrubbery; did that look prudent?—and I saw her with my own eyes; for I peeped through the keyhole—yes, I saw her lolling her head upon his shoulder, in a way that convinced me there was something not proper between them: but sure, my dear Mrs. Carleton, as the countess Vandeleur is so blind, it would only be doing the part of a friend to open her eyes to Miss Obrien's situation; for I must say, I think she is not a fit companion for the other young ladies, who are certainly modest and well-conducted in their behaviour to the gentlemen; and the first time I meet the countess alone, I shall be after making her acquainted with what I have seen, and what I suspect."

"I would rather advise you to let the countess make the discovery herself," said Mrs. Carleton; "she, perhaps, will not approve your being more clear-sighted than herself. The beginning of next month the honourable Mrs. Chatterton and her niece go to Limerick; and as they will so soon take their departure, I think, lady Drog-

hed, you had better confine your observations and surmises to your own bosom; neither lady Indiana Corry, Miss Lambart, nor Miss Belmore, converse with Miss O'Brien more than politeness demands; and the virtuous principles and delicacy of mind they so obviously possess, will prevent them from being influenced or injured by any improper example."

"I believe you are right, Mrs. Carleton," replied lady Drogheda; "so I shall just be after letting things take their own course, for the countess Vandeleur is, we all know, very odd in her notions, and proud as the old one himself; and, sure, she might not be at all obliged to me for my interference."

"On the contrary," resumed the honourable Mrs. Carleton, "she would probably be offended, particularly as the matter appears to sully the lustre of Lord Conway's character. The affair, if your suspicions are just, cannot be concealed long. Leave the discovery to time; persons of the countess Vandeleur's way of thinking seldom thank, or forgive, the friend that reveals to them a disagreeable fact."

“Faith, and I have no wish to make myself an enemy,” replied lady Drogheda; “and for all I never did like Miss Obrien, I am sorry for her folly. Well, self-praise is no recommendation, sure; and I hate to brag; but my husband, the earl of Drogheda, was a little wild in his youth, and if I had not kept him at a distance, and took care of my virtue, I should not this day have been countess of Drogheda, and a visitor at Doneraile Castle.”

CHAP. II.

"I like him not, he is a man made up
Of mystery; in temper violent
Observe his eye, 'tis like the basilisk's,
Flashing deadly venom, his looks are proud,
The correct index of his heart, in which
Are sinful thoughts, wicked intentions —
A black and fearful catalogue."

Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in
all Venice: his reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two
bushels of chaff; you shall seek all day ere you find them, and
when you have them, they are not worth the search

Now by two-headed Janus,
Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time.

SHAKESPEARE

"There is destiny
In marriage. Affection will not be
Compelled. I love you not, and am certain
You are not by fate appointed to be
My husband: now and forever I reject
Your suit."

THE countess of Vandeleur, a perfect wo-
man of fashion, who possessed neither ten-
derness of heart nor patience of temper,
was little adapted to soothe the irritation
occasioned by pain, or to enliven the dul-

ness of a sick chamber; she therefore contented herself with paying a short visit to her suffering husband morning and evening, with coldly inquiring how he had rested the preceding night, and expressing a hope she did not feel, that his pain would shortly abate, and allow him to join the society of his friends. Having performed this duty according to established rule, the countess left her lord to benefit as he might by the prescriptions of his physician, and the care of his attendants, secretly rejoicing that this most *apropos* gouty attack had incapacitated the earl, and delayed for a time the dreaded *brouillerie* which she was certain would take place with lord Conway, whose ill-governed temper would burst forth on the first appearance of command or restriction.

The countess, who still cherished the hope that he preferred, and would marry his cousin, was willing to let him grow weary of the *exigeante* Miss Obrien, whose *minauderies* would, after a time, disgust and weary him, particularly when he found no notice was taken by the earl or herself, of his *ruse de jeu*, for only in that light

did she consider his affecting to be so *eperdument amoureux* with Miss Obrien, and acting the *cavaliere servante*—a character she was persuaded he assumed with no other intention than *pour s'amuser*, and to try how Ada would be affected by his *nonchalante manière* to her, who could not be unconscious, artless and unpretending as she was, that her beauty greatly surpassed that of Miss Obrien: her natural timidity and delicacy of mind, aided by the cherished precepts of the sensible and virtuous baroness Wandesford, made her shrink from the free conversation, and avoid, as much as *bienseance* would permit, any appearance of intimacy with Miss Obrien. Studious to conceal, rather than display, the rich and varied endowments of her highly-cultivated mind, Ada was content to remain in the background, and allow Miss Obrien to play the principal rôle on all occasions, and render herself as conspicuous as she desired. But while, in spite of all her efforts, the ingenuous countenance of Miss Lambert betrayed the alarm and inquietude of her mind, deprived of its tranquillity and cheerfulness by the

mysterious and deceitful conduct of lord Conway, his self-deluding mother persuaded herself that pique and jealousy caused the alteration in her looks, and the thoughtfulness of her manner, and that the departure of Miss O'Brien would restore her bloom and cheerfulness.

Equally misled by vanity, lord Conway proudly exulted in the belief that love of him "*made pale the rose upon the fair one's cheek*;" that, spite of her denials and repeated assertions of dislike, her young heart was devotedly his; and that, when opportunity served, he should triumph to the utmost extent of his wishes.

The complacency and good humour with which Miss Belmore listened to the eternal nothings uttered by sir Harry Ogle, so much encouraged the belief that he was admired and approved, that one morning, after much self-gratulation on his personal appearance and winning behaviour, he took courage to decide the degree of favour he possessed in the fair bosom of Miss Belmore, of whom he requested the honour of a few moments' conversation in private. Unsuspicious of

the declaration he was meditating, Miss Belmore would have offered no objection to his request, only that she was averse to be made the repository of his secrets: with this feeling she replied, "That he could not possibly have a communication for her ear, that might not, with equal propriety, be made known to her friends."

Sir Harry laid his hand upon his heart, sighed, and did his best to make his unmeaning countenance look interesting and pathetic, as he said, "he wished to impart to her alone a matter which certainly he could have no objection to make public to the whole world, only he hoped she would grant him a private audience, as he thought——"

The honourable Mrs. Carleton laughed, and said, "Neither Miss Lambart, nor myself, I can venture to affirm, have the least curiosity to become acquainted with your hopes and thoughts, sir Harry.—Frances, my love," continued she, addressing Miss Belmore, "pray oblige sir Harry Ogle by attending to his request; in the mean time, Miss Lambart will favour me with her company, on a visit of condolence

to the countess Vandeleur, whom I have not seen this morning, and who, no doubt, must be greatly distressed and concerned at the protracted illness of the earl."

Miss Lambart, glad of an excuse to escape the tirade of sir Harry Ogle, followed Mrs. Carleton.*

Sir Harry Ogle looked foolish, and seemed at a loss how to begin.

Miss Belmore begged him to be quick with his communication, "For," said she, looking on her watch, "I have promised lady Indiana Corry and the earl of Drogheda to ride with them this morning, and I have not above a quarter of an hour to spare from my appointment."

"It requires little time, most lovely and adorable Miss Belmore," replied sir Harry, gathering courage, from the recollection that "*faint heart never won fair lady*," "to declare to you the impression your beauty has made on the susceptible heart of your slave, or to assure you that *la chaine que je parte fera toute ma gloire*."

"Prodigiously complimentary! I must allow," said Miss Belmore; "but was it merely to tell me this you requested a pri-

vate interview, which, on recollection, is only a repetition of what you are in the constant habit of saying to every lady you meet?"

"But that is only flattery," replied sir Harry, "*selon le coutume*, what the sweet creatures expect from every well-bred man; but *en verité*, the sincere devotion of my heart is yours alone; and I entreat you, beautiful Miss Belmore," said he, dropping on one knee before her, "I entreat you, smile upon my passion, accept my addresses, and suffer me to hope you will bestow your fair hand upon me, the most humble and ardent of your admirers."

Miss Belmore could scarcely refrain from laughing, as she looked at sir Harry, whose face was twisted into a most ludicrous attempt to express the tender passion."

"The time is gone by, sir Harry," said she, "when love-smitten knights threw themselves at the feet of bright-eyed damsels, to receive from their fair hands the reward of bravery, or a tyrannous command to perform some perilous adventure, in proof of their true affection and allegiance;

but as you have performed no valorous act to merit reward, and as I have no command to lay upon you, I request you will not remain in that ridiculous posture."

Sir Harry Ogle very much disapproved the word ridiculous, as applied in the present instance; he had intended his attitude to be elegant and captivating, and before he rose up, he glanced at his person in an opposite mirror, and thought she was wretchedly deficient in taste, or dissembled her approbation. Conceit readily seized on the latter idea, and snatching her hand, before she was aware of his intention, he kissed it repeatedly, declaring his belief that she was jesting with his passion, and that she was trying the strength of his attachment, with a design to reward it.—
"Come, *ma belle ange*," continued he, "make me happy, by saying you accept me—let me see you smile——"

"As I have very frequently, before now, at your egregious folly and vanity," interrupted Miss Belmore. "I told you, sir Harry, I had but a short time to spare from an engagement; it is now expired; but, to prevent a renewal of this to me ex-

tremely unpleasant subject, I beg to assure you, your person ~~is~~ ^{by} no means to my taste, that I disapprove your manners and conversation, and I now seriously and for ever refuse your addresses: I should not have told you my sentiments in such very plain terms, had you not suffered your vanity to betray you into freedoms which are highly offensive, and not to be allowed by any female of delicacy: your presumption, sir, has demanded from me this reproof; it shall be my care to prevent a repetition of it being necessary."

The crest-fallen sir Harry Ogle stood, like another Cymon, "*with gaping mouth that testified surprise.*"

Miss Belmore retired to fulfil her engagement.

"A downright vixen, 'pon my honour!" exclaimed sir Harry, as the closing door shut her from his view; "I have as much reason to rejoice at her refusal, as ever a poor devil of a mouse had, that was lucky enough to escape from a trap: what airs! I would not marry her, if she had her weight in diamonds—such a spirit as hers would make a man miserable all the days

of his life, if it did not drive him to clap a pistol to his head—such another termagant I never heard—make her lady Ogle! no, no; she is not the sort of wife for me. Not like my person! poor tasteless creature! I pity her want of discernment.” Sir Harry Ogle drew from its case a pocket glass, examined his teeth, arranged the love-lock that hung upon his left temple, and returned the little reflector to his pocket, with a smile of complacency; he then changed the position of the brooch in his cravat, drew on his gloves, and sauntered into the park. Emerging from a shrubbery, he beheld lord Conway and Miss Obrien.—“This is a curious liaison,” thought sir Harry, “and I wonder at its continuance, for certainly there appears very little esteem between the parties; but *n’importe*, it is no concern of mine.”

As they drew near, their conversation did not seem agreeable to each other, for sir Harry caught a sentence or two that appeared like a request urged on the part of the lady, which the gentleman refused to comply with. On perceiving the near approach of sir Harry Ogle, their voices

sank to a whisper, their ruffled countenances were instantly composed, and their angry frowns changed into smiles. Sir Harry Ogle smiled too, though he had that within at variance with his calm exterior. But sir Harry was one of the *haut ton*, and of what use is a fashionable education, if it cannot teach the art of seeming? The trio that now met in Doneraile Park had not studied its deceptive rules in vain; not a trace of discontent was to be discovered in the look or manner of these well-bred persons, who complimented each other, satirized and ridiculed their absent friends, with the same careless air of gaiety as usual, till Miss O'Brien complaining of fatigue, they retraced their way to the castle. Passing under an open window, they heard the tones of a harp.

"Miss Lambart is giving her pupil a lesson," said Miss O'Brien, with a sneer; "it is a great loss to the rising generation that she is rich, for she would have made a most indefatigable governess."

"One of her greatest accomplishments," returned lord Conway, looking scornfully

on Miss O'Brien, "is her perfect government of herself."

"Miss Lambart plays like saint Cecilia, "and sings like an angel!" exclaimed sir Harry.

"Pray, sir Harry, did you ever hear an angel sing?" asked Miss O'Brien.

"Yes," replied the little fop, bowing low, "I have had the superlative felicity and honour of hearing you."

Miss O'Brien smiled, and called him a superlative flatterer.

Lord Conway smiled also, but it was contemptuously, and said, coldly—"Miss Lambart sings and plays correctly."

"Perfectly in time and tune," said sir Harry.

"Pray, sir Harry," demanded Miss O'Brien, "do you understand music?"

"Not I, 'pon my honour, I do not know a note," replied sir Harry; "I cannot tell a minim from a crotchet."

"Then how can you judge," resumed Miss O'Brien, "whether Miss Lambart plays or sings correctly?"

"Entirely by my ear," replied sir Harry; "I have a most exquisite fine ear, and I

flatter myself some little pretension to taste ; but certainly, scientifically speaking, I am no judge."

" No, you have unfortunately discovered more of the criminal than the judge, in your praise of Miss Lambart," said lord Conway.

" Why, is it a crime to praise a lady ?" asked sir Harry.

" Without doubt, to praise one lady in the presence of another, is to be guilty of an unpardonable crime," replied lord Conway.

" 'Pon my honour, I am vastly sorry if I have offended," said sir Harry, " but I assure you, Miss Obrien, I had not the remotest intention of comparing Miss Lambart's singing with yours."

" You could not, for certainly there is no comparison," said lord Conway.

Miss Obrien looked at him with the keen investigation of an inquisitor ; but his countenance gave no evidence by which she could discover the equivocation lurking in his speech ; and she rested in the belief that he actually considered her voice

and science superior to Miss Lambart's. Turning to sir Harry Ogle, she assured him he had not at all offended her, by being the eulogist of Miss Lambart, whom he had her permission to praise, adore, and marry with all possible expedition, for no earthly occurrence would give her greater pleasure than to congratulate them on their nuptials.

Miss Obrien was entering the castle as she made this speech, and her back being towards lord Conway, she did not see the ineffable disdain with which he regarded sir Harry Ogle, nor the look of fury he cast on her. Throwing himself under the spreading branches of a tree, he repeated aloud—

*"Artful coquets at every turn are found,
Who with their tricks and airs our patience try;
In vain their random arrows strive to wound,
They miss the heart, by aiming at the eye."*

Sir Harry Ogle, perceiving lord Conway did not follow Miss Obrien, as he supposed he would, approached the tree under which he reclined, declaring, 'pon his honour, it was a most salubrious and refreshing exercise to roll upon the grass—quite

a simple, primitive, and Arcadian enjoyment—a delightful rural recreation; and if he did not intrude, he would, *sans ceremonie*, place himself in the same recumbent posture.

Lord Conway's temper was not just then *colour de rose*; his meditations, though far from pleasant, he did not wish to have interrupted by such a brainless coxcomb; and he was on the point of telling him to choose another spot, and not obtrude himself where his company was not desired or agreeable; but remembering that his folly had been serviceable to him, and might again, he stifled his ill-humour, and listened with seeming attention, while sir Harry said he wished to take his advice in a matter of great importance.—“ I dare say, my lord,” said the little fop, “ I need not confess what you must have perceived, as it is an undoubted fact, that very few things escape your very acute observation.”

“ You really give my observation much more credit than it merits; and to prove you overrate it, I must beg you will explain, in direct terms, the matter you al-

lude to, or I cannot be competent to offer you the advice you solicit."

"Your lordship's cousin, Miss Lambart, is extremely beautiful."

"The young lady is *passablement bien*," replied his lordship, coldly.

"Very gentle and amiable."

"She appears so," said lord Conway, with a strong effort concealing his impatience to get at the point to which sir Harry Ggle was taking so tedious and circuitous a path.

"Sensible, and highly accomplished," resumed sir Harry, "and——"

"Pshaw!" interrupted lord Conway; "I detest what the world calls sensible and accomplished women, for if they fancy themselves sensible, they weary you with sentiment, or irritate you with argument; and if they believe themselves accomplished, they annoy you with exhibitions of distorted faces on ivory, and red, green, and blue daubs, which they call landscapes, or they stun you with discords, which their flatterers misname music."

"I confess myself to be a prodigious admirer of accomplishments," resumed sir

Harry, "particularly when displayed by a sensible charming female; for instance Miss Lambart; a man must be a stock or stone whom she could not inspire with admiration and love." Lord Conway's eye flashed contempt, as sir Harry added—"And it is on the passion her beauty has inspired, that I am desirous of obtaining your lordship's advice."

Scorn and derision were the predominant feelings of lord Conway, as he surveyed the being, who, without any pretensions, mental or personal, presumed to look up to her, the only woman whom he, the heir of Vandeleur, thought worthy of his regard; but assuming an air of unconcern, he asked—"Do you mean to say you are in love with Miss Lambart, sir Harry?"

"*En vérité*," replied he, "I am in love with her to distraction; I think of her all day, and dream of her all night; and if it were not for the hope of rendering myself agreeable to her, I should die of the tender passion."

"*Can such ambition dwell in little minds*," thought lord Conway, as sir Harry asked him, whether it would be best to do

clare his passion to Miss Lambart immediately, or wait till they met at Dublin?

The image of Ada, radiant in youth, in innocence, and beauty, passed before the mental eye of lord Conway; her heart, with all its affections, he believed devoted to him, notwithstanding her asseverations to the contrary; but he wished to amuse himself at the expence of sir Harry Ogle's mortification; and with well-acted sincerity, he advised him to lose no time in preferring his suit to Miss Lambart—"Remember the good old adage, '*delays are dangerous*,'" continued lord Conway; "as a friend, I advise you to take the first opportunity that presents itself, to declare your passion to *ma belle cousine*; woo her, and win her, and be assured I wish you all the success you deserve. But is not this a sudden whim? I understood your admiration and adoration were offered at the shrine of Miss Belmore's beauty. I suspect your passion for Miss Lambart has been elicited by some pique, or *petit brouille*. Come, be candid, sir Harry—have you not offended, or taken offence

at Miss Belmore? I see by your countenance I have guessed right."

"No, 'pon my honour," replied sir Harry, "we have had no sort of quarrel; Miss Belmore did me the honour to shew me a preference, which was very flattering, and I acknowledge I was a little *épris* with her, till I luckily discovered her temper. But it is ungentlemanly to speak ill of a female, and I shall only observe, a very high-spirited wife would not be to my taste; I have no idea of being henpecked; I would not be the husband of a termagant for the universe. Miss Belmore, I have no doubt, thought she might be lady Ogle, whenever she pleased, and she has thrown out hints of approval which I would not understand, because I found our tempers would never agree." Lord Conway laughed at this *bavardage*, and sir Harry continued—"No petticoat government for me—There is my friend sir Denis Kennedy, the poor devil dares not invite a friend to his table, or engage himself to spend a day abroad, without asking permission of his wife; and, *entre nous*, my lord, the man who marries Miss Belmore

must not dare to say his soul is his own; this was my reason for cutting—no female government for me.”

“ You are perfectly right to stick to that resolution,” said lord Conway—“ female government is not to be endured. But have you no compassion for the disappointment and regret you will occasion the poor lady, by withdrawing your addresses?”

Sir Harry shrugged his shoulders, and declared, 'pon his honour, he was sorry, very sorry, but sincerely hoped she had not so deeply fixed her regards on him, as to render her inconsolable for his loss.

Lord Conway, though he despised the egregious vanity of sir Harry Ogle, humoured it, by saying, he thought it very possible she might pine herself into a consumption.

“ But before I offer my *devoirs* to Miss Lambart,” resumed sir Harry, “ it would perhaps be proper that I should inform the earl and countess of Vandeleur of my intention, and solicit their approval of my suit.”

“ If the young lady approves, that will

be quite sufficient for you," replied lord Conway. "The earl of Vandeleur is one of Miss Lambart's guardians; but by the tenure of her mother's will, he is restricted from compelling, or even influencing, her religious or matrimonial sentiments and inclinations; besides, I have a notion your suit would be rejected in that quarter, for it is reported that the earl and countess of Vandeleur have already selected a husband for Miss Lambart, in which case you cannot expect their concurrence. Never look blank, man, at this intelligence, which, if true, ought not to discourage you; the wishes and intentions of parents and guardians present but feeble obstacles against determined resistance and perseverance. Make sure of the lady's love, obtain her consent, and you may laugh at and despise opposition."

Sir Harry Ogle warmly thanked lord Conway for his disinterested and friendly advice; and promising to be guided by it, he left him, elated with hope, to arrange some complimentary speeches against he met Miss Lambart at dinner.

Before he was well out of hearing, lord Conway exclaimed:—" *To be so pestered with a popinjay!*" Yet the animal's folly is diverting. In love with Ada! will she listen to his nonsense? will she accept his addresses? impossible! But he deserves caning for his insolent presumption, and I feel inclined to inflict the castigation he merits. Were he to ask the concurrence of my lady mother, she would haughtily desire him to shorten his visit; and, at this particular time, ' *I could better spare a better man,*' for he relieves me from the irksome task of flattering her, whose insatiable appetite for adulation wearies and sickens me.—But if Ada should accept this fool, this gilded butterfly! no, no, it is impossible that he should gain her love—a mind so exalted as hers, so rich in intellect, can never so debase itself; she will, she must despise him for the arrogance of looking up to her. And I, fool! credulous fool! ' *who, like the base Judcan, have thrown a pearl away, richer than all my tribe,*' who have hampered——Yet, if Ada loves me—if I were certain that her scorn was assumed——"

The approach of monsieur Lemain put an end to this disjointed soliloquy.

Having read the letter the obsequious valet presented, lord Conway tore it to pieces, exclaiming—“The mercenary scoundrel refuses my request! I perceive the bribe I offered him was not sufficient. McCarthy, the canting hypocrite, regrets he cannot oblige me, for the important document I wished him to send was given into the hands of——Let me be gone!” said he, starting up; “lady Drogheda and Mrs. Chatterton are coming this way, and I am in no humour to play the agreeable, and answer impertinent questions. Be quick, Lemain, and gather up those scraps of paper; leave nothing for the lynx eye of Mrs. Chatterton to discover, for her curiosity is ever on the alert.”

“*Oui*, milor; madame Chatter is ver fond, given much to pry, and ask de question impertinent.”

“Follow me to my apartment immediately,” said lord Conway, hastily retreating, as he perceived, from the direction the ladies had taken, they intended to join him.

“Vat de diable, milor, tink he vill do now?” said Lemain, as he gathered up the scraps of paper; “here vill be de grand explosion ver soon—de blow up; vell, *n’importe*, I sall not fatigue *mon tête* vid de affair. Milor, he try to push off de day of evil; but it vill stare him in de face ver soon; ha, ha, ha!” laughing heartily; “*oui, oui, ma foi!* it will be here *tout-à-l’heure*—ver soon.”

“Who will come very soon, monsieur Lemain?” asked the honourable Mrs. Chatterton; “is there a stranger expected?”

“*Oui, madame*——” bowing and retreating.

“Well, but you need not hurry so, monsieur,” resumed Mrs. Chatterton; “stop and tell me the name of the person that is expected.”

“It would be much, ver great pleasure afford me, madame, to oblige you; but you will pardonne me, be so good, for I have not heard de name mention.”

“Not heard the name mentioned,” said Mrs. Chatterton; “that is very strange indeed, and exceeds belief.”

“ Sure now and mounseer is after putting a trifling bit of a joke upon us,” said lady Drogheda.

“ Very well, monsieur, it does not signify,” resumed Mrs. Chatterton; “ I do not wish you to betray secrets, for a secret I suppose it is, or you would not be so careful to pick up those scraps of paper.”

“ Faith and that may be done, and no secret at all in the case,” rejoined lady Drogheda; “ for bits of paper scattered about the grass are not much of an ornament.”

“ Milor has not de vish, de intention, dat his *billet-doux* give trouble to any personne to put dis and dat togeder, so he tell me, gader up every *petit morcean* : so I obey his command, and pick dem all up, and now I go burn de *flamme amoureuse* in de fire of de *cuisine* ; and den I go dress milor.”

“ I should really like to know who that letter came from,” said Mrs. Chatterton; “ but Lemain is as cunning as a fox—there is no getting any thing out of him.”

“ Faith and it is right little myself would understand,” replied lady Drogheda,

“if he was ever so willing to tell, for I know nothing at all of French sure, and mounseer’s lingo is such half-and-half stuff, that it would puzzle a moonshee to get at his meaning.”

“French is become so fashionable among persons in high life, and is so universally spoken, that it would be worth while, my dear lady Drogheda, to devote a small portion of your time to acquire it; if you were to devote two or three hours every morning to study, you——”

“Study is it you mean,” interrupted her ladyship; “me take to study French at my time of life! Sure now, Mrs. Chatterton, it’s joking you are. I might, perhaps, be after taking your advice, if I was twenty years younger; but sorrow the time I had for study before I got married, and afterwards I was taken up altogether with nursing my babes, poor little lambs!” continued she, wiping away the tears that started to her eyes; “they were all taken from me but Indy—my three fine boys, that I hoped to see brave soldiers like their father: but sure I am doing wrong to grieve after them, for the good priest,

father O'Connel, told me they were better provided for, and the sweet little darlings were happier than I could have made them ; but I beg your pardon, Mrs. Chatterton, for sure, when I am thinking of my babes, and how often I have nursed the earl of Drogheda, my husband, when he has been wounded in battle, with the enemy on every side of me, and myself all alone, without a creature of womankind near me, to say so much as I am sorry for you, and I expecting to see the life go out of him every minute, and that I, poor creature, should be left a widow, to fight my way through fire and sword, with no one to protect me, only him who has promised to be a husband to the widow, and father to the fatherless."

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton was ready to yawn at what she thought the tiresome recollections of lady Drogheda, who continued to say—"No, no, all my youthful days were spent in hardships and troubles ; and now, faith, when I have it in my power to enjoy life, and take my pleasure, I shall not be after plaguing and puzzling my brains with studying how

to parley vows French. Lady Indiana Corry had the great luck to be born when her father was a general, and could afford to keep her to her learning; and she can speak French, and sure that is quite sufficient, for she can interpret for the earl and me, as long as she remains with us; and when the darling gets a husband, faith, I believe we shall be able to make ourselves understood, because we shall always have a friend with us, that speaks all languages, and is made welcome every where."

"Wealth is a powerful recommendation, I allow," said Mrs. Chatterton; "but it is very desirable and pleasant to be able to——Bless my soul!" suddenly breaking off, "that is the first dinner-bell. I had no idea it was so late; but your agreeable conversation, lady Drogheda, has so engaged my attention, that——pray let us make haste, or it will be impossible for me to be ready for dinner."

The earl of Vandeleur's gout still kept him a prisoner in his apartment, where, having paid their visit of condolence, sincere on the part of Ada and Mrs. Carle-

ton, the appearance of the physician relieved the countess of Vandeleur from any further efforts to appear affectionate, or pretend concern for her lord's sufferings.

Leading the way to her boudoir, the countess took a letter from a silver basket that ornamented the table at which she seated herself—"You perhaps, Mrs. Carleton," said she, "may have heard this morning from Dublin?"

Mrs. Carleton's reply was a negative.

"You then, as well as Miss Lambart, will be shocked to learn, that lady Neagle and sir Charles Rokeby are no more."

"Dead!" exclaimed Miss Lambart; "both dead?"

"It is too true," replied the countess; "they are both dead."

"Their marriage was confidently spoken of, as settled to take place in a few weeks," said Mrs. Carleton; "and I met them in good health, walking in the Phoenix Park, the morning before I left Dublin."

"They were taken off very suddenly," resumed the countess; "but lady Phillimore has written me the particulars, and you shall hear." Unfolding the letter, she

read the following extract :—“ The curricl̄e of sir Charles Rokeby was, as usual, driven by himself; he appeared in high spirits, and was observed to laugh heartily at something lord Neagle, who was seated beside him, said, when Dermot Moody, a well-known idiot, ran across the street, flourishing a stick, to the top of which was tied a large bunch of orange lilies, at the same time vociferating ‘ King William for ever!’ either the boy’s voice, or his orange lilies, frightened the horses, for the spirited animals flew off, with a speed that sir Charles, though allowed to be a capital whip, was unable to check, or prevent them from dashing the curricl̄e against a heavy-loaded waggon, which having just issued from a gateway into the narrow street, could neither turn to the right or the left, and the inevitable consequence was, the overturning of the curricl̄e. Well had it been, if its utter demolition had been the worst result! but, unhappily, sir Charles Rokeby had an arm and leg broken, and lord Neagle received a severe contusion on his head, besides bruises on different parts of his body. The house of

lady Neagle being in the next street, the sufferers were conveyed thither. Lady Neagle had, for some days, been indisposed, and the shock she received from the sight of her son and her lover bleeding, and to all appearance dead, threw her into violent convulsions, in which she expired the same night, without ever becoming sensible, though every method was tried to restore her. The bruises of lord Neagle are not believed to be of a dangerous nature, though he continues extremely ill; but after having endured the amputation of his leg, poor sir Charles Rokeby only lingered to dictate his will, and to exonerate the character of lady Neagle from every shadow of impropriety, in all that related to her acquaintance with him. Only a small estate being attached to the title of Rokeby, sir Charles has bequeathed the whole of his immense property to lord Neagle, and his heirs for ever. At his own particular desire, sir Charles is to be buried beside lady Neagle, in her family vault."

Miss Lambart sighed heavily.

The countess of Vandeleur, laying down,

the letter, raised her eyes to the face of her niece, and said—"There certainly is no possibility of understanding the sentiments of young ladies; it never once entered my imagination that you entertained a penchant for sir Charles Rokeby."

Miss Lambart's pale cheek was flushed with crimson, as she replied—"If you had entertained such an idea, madam, believe me it would have been unfounded. As a man, sir Charles Rokeby never attracted my regard; but as a fellow-creature, suffering bodily torture from a fearful accident, and called suddenly into eternity, I cannot help deeply feeling; and not for him alone, but for the untimely end of the injured, calumniated lady Neagle."

"I am glad for lord Neagle's sake," observed Mrs. Carleton, "that sir Charles Rokeby's dying testimony has cleared the fame of his mother; for my own part, I never was sceptical with regard to her virtue, though I could not altogether acquit her of imprudence; but she was beautiful, and became a widow when she was little more than a child; very many excuses are to be found for her errors; and I most

truly lament the cause and manner of her death—it was terrible.”

“Very shocking indeed,” replied the countess. “Poor sir Charles Rokeby, though he had the character of a rover, he was so elegant, so perfectly fashionable, and well-bred: heigho! I shall miss him extremely from my circle, particularly at Dublin.”

Miss Lambart had no reason to believe the countess of Vandeleur was possessed of much sensibility; but the unfeeling way in which she spoke of so dreadful an occurrence, absolutely astonished as much as it shocked her.

“Lord Neagle,” resumed the countess, “will now be in great request, with dowagers who have marriageable daughters; in fact, he will now grow into consequence, with those females of rank who, when he was poor, had not a smile to bestow upon him. His person is but so so; rather awkwardly made about the shoulders; but *n’importe*, many young ladies will think his fortune worth playing the agreeable to obtain.”

“Lord Neagle’s excellent understand-

ing and amiable disposition," replied Mrs. Carleton, "are preferable to a handsome exterior; but allowing him to be a plain man, more enviable will be the lot of the woman to whom he gives his hand, if she has but wisdom enough to know that her happiness depends on the honourable principles of her husband, not on his person."

"Lord Neagle ought to be highly obliged to you for being his voluntary encomiast," said lady Vandeleur: "and really, Mrs. Carleton, if you were not already married, this very warm panegyric would make me suspect you had a design upon his heart yourself."

Mrs. Carleton smiled good-humouredly, as she replied—"You forget, countess, that I am older than the late lady Neagle."

"Monsieur Cupidon is renowned, you know, for contrarities," said the countess; "and a handful of years would afford no impediment to the exercise of his despotic dominion; and indeed we see frequent instances of ladies of a certain age being preferred, especially when they have the *bonne fortune* to preserve a youthful exte-

rior, which you have effected, to my envy and admiration."

Mrs. Carleton, though not vain of her personal charms, was not displeased at being complimented on the freshness of her complexion; she wished to retain a youthful appearance, because she was sincerely attached to her husband, and was pleased to believe her person still had sufficient charms to retain his affection.—"I have been a happy indulged wife," said Mrs. Carleton, "and have hitherto enjoyed excellent health, and to these causes I attribute my exemption from wrinkles and a sallow skin."

"Why, to be sure," replied the countess, "ill health is no promoter of beauty, and a harsh bad-tempered husband will wear out the very best constitution—eternal contradiction will have the vexatious effect of destroying bloom and planting wrinkles. But this is a distressing subject—let us dismiss it.—Bless me, Miss Lambart, I have not heard your voice this half-hour—what can your thoughts be so deeply engaged in? are you meditating upon the perfections of lord Neagle?"

“No, madam,” replied Ada; “I was thinking of his misfortunes—the loss of an idolized mother, and an esteemed friend.”

“The fortune he gets by these losses will be a consoling balsam to his grief,” said the countess; “though to you his acquisition of wealth is of little moment, who have sufficient to enrich both; and if lord Neagle is the object of your preference——”

Miss Lambart blushed deeply at what she thought an unwarrantable and indelicate investigation of her thoughts; and interrupting the countess, she said—“Believe me, madam, I have no preference for lord Neagle; he never was—never can be—any thing to me; though I confess I am premature in my denial, as it is not likely his lordship will expose himself to my refusal.”

Of that the countess of Vandeleur was by no means certain; but she did not think it necessary to express her thoughts on the subject.—“It gives me much satisfaction,” said she, “to find you are not impressed in his favour; for I confess my wishes do

not point out lord Neagle as a husband for you."

"I am not impressed in favour of any one," replied Miss Lambart; "I never permit myself to think of marrying. I am yet very young; and if I can pretend to answer for my own intentions, it will be some years, at least not till I am of age, that I shall allow myself to think of altering my condition."

"A most wise and discreet resolve," returned the countess, laughing; "but, alas poor mutable human nature! like other wise and prudent resolves, it will assuredly be broken. You are not of my faith, therefore not obliged to confess, or else I have a notion it would appear, that a certain tall, brilliant-eyed young nobleman—How is this—tears and agitation! I really did not expect to find you so very sensitive and nervous on the subject. But pray be composed; for if, as I suspect, I have guessed truly, you may be certain, dearest Ada, of my warm approval and concurrence."

Mrs. Carleton could not mistake the

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meaning of the countess; but having witnessed the very particular conduct of lord Conway and Miss O'Brien, she wished that the lovely artless Miss Lambart should regard him with indifference; but her tears and blushes served to confirm the opinion that she actually loved lord Conway, though she repeatedly assured the countess her heart was perfectly free.

"For the present," said the countess, "we will let the subject rest; but I trust a very short time will put us in possession of a clew to certain mysteries, which, I confess, have given the earl of Vandeleur and myself much secret uneasiness. But cheer up your spirits, my dear Ada; your reserve and timidity affords the bold and presuming an advantage which could not possibly be theirs, if you would only dress your face in smiles, and exert the pre-eminent talents with which you are gifted, and which, I am concerned to say, since the arrival of lord Conway, you have been as careful to hide, as most young ladies would to display, any they might chance to possess."

Vexed and mortified beyond measure

at the interpretation that had been put on her looks and depressed spirits, which had given cause for belief that she encouraged a partiality for lord Conway, Miss Lambart retired to her dressing-room, to weep, and think how she might best convince the countess of Vandeleur and her guests, how much they had misjudged her heart, and mistaken the cause of her dejection. The good baroness Wandesford, whom she revered and loved as a parent, was gone on a tour to the lakes; at the present distressing moment, she could not apply to her for advice; and she now deeply repented that she had suffered false shame to prevent her from informing her best, and indeed only true, friend, at the commencement of lord Conway's insulting conduct.—“ Yet a little while longer,” said Ada, “ I must suffer this mortification, and then I will explain all I have endured, and all I fear, to my more than mother; and she will feel for, and understand, my wounded delicacy, and free me at once from degradation and persecution.”

Janet, in spite of the repeated warnings

of her mother, and the advice of Miss Lambart, had lent a pleased and attentive ear to the broken English of monsieur Lemain, till he had persuaded her that she was the prettiest girl he had ever seen; that he was over head and ears in love with her—that he would, whenever she liked, make her his wife, and take her to Paris, the largest and grandest city in the world, where he would set up a tavern, of which he would make her mistress, where she would have nothing at all to do but dress in silks and satins, be affable and obliging to her guests, and order and scold her servants. .Poor Janet! similar flattery and fine promises had won the belief of older and wiser females than her; and it is no wonder that such grandeur and happiness in perspective, was too much for the weak brain, and weaker heart, to withstand.

Janet was most sincerely attached to her mistress, by whom she had always been treated with particular kindness; but she had been led, by Lemain's artful questions, and the pernicious example of Miss O'Brien's *femme de chambre*, *ma'mselle* Millefleur, to speak freely of every person, and every

circumstance that came under her observation. Through her imprudent communications, Lemain was enabled to convey to lord Conway an exaggerated account of Miss Lambart's dislike of Miss O'Brien, of the restless nights she passed, and the tears she shed in the retirement of her chamber, all which the artful Frenchman represented as proceeding from the violent passion she entertained for his lordship.

What the heart wishes, it is prone to believe, even against opposing evidence; and this was the case with the proud, infatuated Alfred. The conduct of Ada to himself, at all times distant and reserved, would have convinced him that he had failed to awaken in her young heart a tender sentiment; but, unfortunately, he was well experienced in the coquetry of women; had he not known that they refuse, with the hope to be solicited—retire, to be pursued—throw coldness into their looks, to hide the warmth of their feelings—and teach their lips to pronounce no, when their inclinations would gladly say yes—and had not the intelligence continually brought by Lemain fed his vanity, by.

suggesting that Miss Lambart was jealous of his attentions to Miss Obrien, and was actually fretting herself to death for love of him, he might have believed himself an object of indifference, if not of absolute dislike, to his fair cousin.

“ *En verité*, milor, mademoiselle Lambart, she be *malade d’amour*; she vill die of de jalousee, if you no take de pity.”

After having listened to Lemain’s account, which more and more confirmed his belief of Ada’s love, lord Conway struck his forehead with his clenched hand, and furiously exclaimed—“ I see it all; I have suffered myself to be duped, gulled, imposed upon, by that artful—I have been a fool, an idiot! for I ought to have been well aware that the opinion of a woman was never to be regarded in any matter that related to her own sex, particularly where beauty and talent were the subjects of inquiry.”

“ *C’est bien vrai*, milor,” said Lemain; “ de vomans never praise de beaute in von anoder; de female here, and at Paris, and all over de world, all de same; *oui, oui*, I understand dat.”

“ But do you understand, Lemain, that I am desperately, seriously in love with Miss Lambart ?”

“ Oui, oui, milor, de ver same as you be eperdument amoureux a thousand time before,” replied Lemain, laughing ; “ let me try if I can have de recollection—dere vas the marchesa dat you run away vid from her mari, and dat run away from you vid de baron von Sotlenberg.”

Lord Conway did not appear pleased with this reminiscence ; but though he frowned, Lemain, nothing ayed, continued to say—“ Den dere vas de pretty peasant girl you buy of her môder ; she did not run away from you, but——”

“ She was a fiend,” interrupted lord Conway ; “ never mention Ianthe again ; if I had not left her, she would have poisoned me ; if you value my favour, speak of her no more.”

“ Den dere vas de French ladies, de duchesse Villeroi, and de comtesse Laval, and madame St. Roussillon, and her sister mademoiselle Rosemont, you know, milor, you vas in love vid dem all ; and now

I tink of de names of more, great many, besides mademoiselle Obrien."

"I detest her," exclaimed lord Conway, furiously; "she is my plague, my torment."

"Mafoi, so I hear ver much gentlemens say, after dey are——"

"Peace," interrupted lord Conway; "if you wish to continue in your present situation, never breathe a hint of that cursed——forswear all knowledge, forget altogether——I would," continued he, pressing his hand upon his forehead, "I would I could erase all remembrance from my brain: that paper, Lemain, that paper, so essential to my future happiness, that infernal record of my folly——has Millefleur searched carefully?"

"She tell me so, milor——she turn every ting out of de trunk, and de banbox, she look in de dressing-case, in de casket among de bijoux; but after all de romage and de trouble, she find no papier, no ting of de sort."

"Bid her search again," said lord Conway, impatiently; "she has perhaps overlooked it; tell her, the moment she places

it in my possession, I will give her a hundred guineas."

"Ver handsome *douceur*, certainement," replied Lemain; "and. *mamselle* Millefleur vill, *sans* doubt, see her interest in dis affair, and vill make **von* oder look avec pleasure, *milor*."

"If this cursed paper can be secured," resumed lord Conway, "I may pursue my own wishes, and at the same time have the credit of obliging the earl and countess of Vandeleur; but if I fail to recover it, why then, other methods must be resorted to."

After taking a few perturbed strides across the apartment, his lordship seemed suddenly to recollect himself; and bidding Lemain reach his hat and gloves, asked—"Did you not tell me Miss Lambart was gone to the village?"

"Oui, *milor*; her nurse, her mere, as *mademoiselle* Lambart call de old vomans, has met vid de malheur, de accident to hurt her foot, or her arm, or something, so *mademoiselle*, in much ver great concern, go vid Janet to see vat is the matter,

for she ver good, and have de tender heart, and feel for de poor peoples, and de nurse above all de rest."

"I wish to converse with Miss Lambart, free from the observing eyes that follow my every action here at the castle," said lord Conway; "follow me to the village, Lemain, and be careful to make the agreeable to the *soubrette*, while I confer with her mistress."

Norah had unfortunately sprained her wrist, and had suffered much pain, but the swelling had gone down, and the inflammation had disappeared; and the old woman, in comparative ease, was enjoying the fresh morning air at her cottage door, when Miss Lambart and Janet surprised her by their early and unexpected visit.— "And sure is it yourself, my darling Miss Lambart, that is caring for, and thinking of your old nurse, and coming all the way from the castle this blessed morning, to know, and see with your own sweet eyes, whether she is getting better, when you have so many genteels at the castle, and are altogether so taken up with helping the countess to entertain her company,

now the earl, poor gentleman, has got his gouty fit come upon him. Sit down, my jewel, for I am sure you must be tired, walking in the sun this warm morning; and faith now, I am glad my neighbour, Katty M'Gore, was so thoughtful and kind as to step in and brush up the floor a bit for me, for sorrow the use can I make of my arm yet; but thanks," said Norah, turning up her eyes, and devoutly crossing herself, "great thanks be to him, who cares even for such a worm as I am, and to saint Patrick, and to all the saints, not forgetting the blessed oil you sent me to bathe my wrist, for the pain has nearly left me, and I shall soon be able to do for myself again; but I am after prating all about myself sure, and you are looking quite pale and——"

"I am a little weary with my walk; do not alarm yourself, dear mother," said Miss Lambart; "I am extremely thirsty, and a little new milk would greatly refresh me."

"You shall have it directly, my jewel," said Norah; "run, Janet, to the field where Katty, M'Gore is milking; make

haste—take that glass jug, and come back again without stopping to say a word to Katty.”

As soon as Janet had left the cottage, Miss Lambart drew her chair close to Norah, and taking from her neck the gold chain so often mentioned, she pressed her finger on the ornament attached to it, which opening, disclosed, in rude characters, the words, “ERIN GO BRAGH,” and the initials G. F. G.”

“To whose name, dear mother,” said Miss Lambart, gazing with deep interest on the quivering lip and tearful eye of her nurse, “do those letters belong? Tell me, I beseech you, what was the name of the stranger who gave me this chain?”

Norah shook her head.

“I cannot even guess what secret cause you may have for concealment,” resumed Miss Lambart; “but your tears, your changing countenance, conspire to convince me you can explain this mysterious gift; you can tell me—yes, dear Norah, I know you can tell me the name of the donor.”

“And is it my countenance that is after

deceiving you, my dear child?" said Norah, wiping the tears from her ears; "och then the more shame for it, at these years, and after receiving so much good advice from father O'Leary, to be committing such sin and wickedness: as to my tears, honey dear, they have no meaning at all at all, only but just the sorrowful remembrance of the poor gentleman, who looked so thin, and pale, and sad, when he kissed your smiling face, and hung the chain about your little neck, and prayed so earnestly for a blessing on your head."

"Shall I never learn the name of this generous, interesting stranger?" said Miss Lambart, pressing her lips on the chain with great emotion, her tears mingling with those of Norah; "I would give worlds did I possess them, to know his name."

"I was never told it, machree," replied Norah; "and it cuts me to my heart's core, sure it does, to think that you should be asking me so many times to tell you what the gentleman never so much as whispered in my ears. Ochone! and then to think of Phelim O'Connor, my own

brother's son, one of my own blood, never once sending to inquire after his relations, since he left us to go rambling about the world beyond seas, bad manners to him for the same ! Do not you weep, Miss Lambart ; a lanna 'vown you are young, and may expect to see many and many happy years, when my ould head is laid under the sod ; it is myself sure, my precious bouchil, that has the cause to be shedding of the salt tears ; not, honey, because my face or my tongue is deceitful at all to you, whom I love as dear as my own life, but because I have nothing at all sure to tell you that would give you the least bit of satisfaction, and because I can get no intelligence concerning that boy, Phelim O'Connor, who has gone away from these parts so many sorrowful years. Och sure, and it would give me the greatest of comfort, if he would only be after putting pen to paper, and just telling me the life was clean gone out of him, and that he had been decently waked, and buried like a Christian."

Miss Lambart was endeavouring to comfort her foster-mother, when the cottage

door suddenly opened, not to give entrance to Janet with the milk, but to admit lord Conway, who advanced without ceremony. Miss Lambart almost shrieked when she beheld the intruder; and Norah, starting from her chair, asked what were his lordship's commands.

"Commands, my good woman—I have none," replied lord Conway; "I called to inquire after your health, and to offer you any assistance you might stand in need of; but I perceive any interference on my part is altogether unnecessary, Miss Lambart being here."

"Sure and she is," replied Norah, "and blessings on her, it is myself that has the great reason to know and be thankful to her goodness; and it is very kind and thoughtful of your lordship, to be caring about a poor worthless creature like me, and coming out of your way to——"

"Never speak of it, Norah," interrupted lord Conway; "I should feel much pleasure in being serviceable to you; the morning is warm, and I am thirsty—will you allow me to sit down?"

Norah would have handed a chair, but

seating himself on a bench near the door, he asked her if she could give him a draught of milk or whey.

Norah saw by the look of Miss Lambart that she was not pleased at his lordship's intrusion; but fearful of offending the earl and countess of Vandeleur, by shewing disrespect to their son, she quitted her seat to seek after Janet, whose long absence," she said, "was unaccountable, particularly as she had been told to make haste; but I suppose," added Norah, "she is chattering with Katty in the dairy."

As the old woman spoke, she was moving towards the door, when Miss Lambart, happy to seize the opportunity of quitting lord Conway, bade her remain. —"I have been here much longer than I supposed," said she, looking at the cuckoo clock that ornamented a corner of the cottage. "Remain, dear Norah; your wrist is still very weak, and may suffer from the exertion of moving about; I will send Katty McGore with the milk: I dare say I shall find Janet with her."

But the quick eye of Norah had already found Janet, and in a situation highly dis-

pleasing to her, seated under a hedge with a young man, and that man lord Conway's French valet, as detestable as the "duoul" to her, who had a prejudice against his nation, and believed every Frenchman must be wicked, and his intimacy dangerous to a young woman. Unheeding of Miss Lambart's request that she would remain, Norah, brimful of anger, darted out of the cottage, to vent her indignation on her impudent daughter; and before Miss Lambart could follow her, lord Conway closed the door, and placed his back against it.

"Let me pass, my lord," said Ada; "I insist upon your removing from the door; how dare you detain me?"

"Love, my fair cousin, will dare do much, that woman in her secret thought approves, while she affects to resent and frown. I confess," continued lord Conway, "I have given you cause to be displeased, to complain of my conduct; I confess, Ada, it has been ambiguous; you have accused me of deceit, you have believed me unprincipled; but though I may have appeared all this, and even worse,

yet can I lay my hand upon my heart, and say, it is sincere in its adoration of you; I utter not the language of deceit, when I most solemnly swear, I love you best of all your sex. Nay, be not so impatient to leave me: why do you struggle to release your hand? If you knew the pleasure it gives me to press upon it the kiss of true affection, you would not grudge me the happiness, or cast on me such chilling looks of scorn and incredulity. Cruel, inexorable girl, you have inspired a passion that will expire only with my life."

"Do not trouble yourself to make professions, my lord, for they gain no belief with me," replied Ada; "they make no impression, for, young as I am, and inexperienced in the ways of the world, I am not so weakly credulous as to be imposed upon with the inflated language of romance; I neither approve nor credit your professions of love; as the son of the earl and countess of Vandeleur, and my relation, you have my good wishes—your conduct will not allow me to add my respect."

"I will entitle myself to that hereafter,"

said lord Conway, "and my unbounded love shall prove to you——"

"I desire not your love," resumed Ada; "for was I certain that your professions proceeded sincerely from your heart, I would answer as I have ever done—from me you have nothing to hope—I never can return your love."

Lord Conway's reply was interrupted by Norah driving Janet in before her, with the milk she had been sent for, but had entirely forgotten, while listening to the fascinating compliments of the insinuating monsieur Lemain, who had entranced her senses, and spell-bound her to the bank under the hedge, by comparing her eyes, her lips, and her cheeks, to all the flowers of the field. Alas, poor Janet! the delusions of man have caused many a simple maiden, as well as thee, to "*take no note of time,*" and forget their duties.

Miss Lambart wished Norah good-morning; and resolving to take the shortest path to the castle, she hastened from the village, hoping that lord Conway would receive her rejection as she designed it, and intrude his offensive declara-

tions of love upon her no more; but though she walked fast, to prevent his overtaking her, at the entrance to the park, to her surprise and vexation, she saw him leaning on the gate, which he opened to let her pass, and found him determined to be her escort home.

Janet fell back, much better pleased to have monsieur Lemain for a companion than her mistress, who had closely questioned her respecting her long absence, and reproved her for not returning with the milk she had been sent for, all which Janet thought extremely hard and cruel, especially at that time, when her mother had not only scolded, but had, in addition to her words, given her a smart box or two on the ear, for neglecting her duty, and sitting beside, and listening to the outlandish jabber and lies of a French jackanapes; for by this degrading appellation, Norah, in her anger, had called the captivating Lemain, who, while obeying the commands of his lord, was pursuing his own designs against the silly Janet, who believing every word he uttered, sighed for the hour when he would make her

madame Lemain, and place her at the head of the first tavern in Paris, when she should rustle in her silks, wear a watch at her side, and have nothing to do but command her servants. Oh, how Janet longed for the happy hour, when neither mistress nor mother would control her actions, when she should assume all the dignity of a married woman, and call the delightful monsieur Lemain husband! But while Janet thought her companion the most entertaining and agreeable of men, though she did not understand the one half of what he said to her, Miss Lambart was beyond measure annoyed by lord Conway, who, though so lately and so seriously repulsed, again renewed the theme of his love; insolently protesting his belief that her dejection, so apparent to him, and, indeed, to all her friends, was occasioned by a passion for him, which she vainly attempted to conceal and deny.

“Your vanity be your punishment,” said Miss Lambart, darting on him a look of indignant contempt.

“Your love—this little white hand,” forcibly placing it under his arm, “shall

be my reward," replied lord Conway ; " circumstances, tyrannous circumstances, dearest Ada, compel me to adopt a behaviour not only mysterious and seemingly dishonourable, but repugnant to my nature, and hateful to myself. I am, at this moment, the slave of—but a very short time will render concealment unnecessary—a very few days will, I hope, enable me to explain, to your entire satisfaction, the motives that have constrained me, most unwillingly, believe me, to——"

" I ask no explanation," interrupted Ada ; " I inquire not into your motives ; I request, lord Conway, nay, I insist, that you cease to persecute me with avowals of love, and to insult me with accusations and suspicions, which have no foundation but in your own vanity ; your professions are offensive to my delicacy, and I again repeat, I never will accept your addresses."

" Till they are sanctioned by the earl and countess of Vandeleur," said lord Conway ; " well, obdurate girl, your prudery shall shortly be gratified, and then the formal rules of propriety being observed, you will allow me to hope."

“Hope nothing from me,” returned Miss Lambart; “our relationship, if I had no other objection, would be quite sufficient to deter me from ever thinking of a nearer connection.”

“The wisdom of the Protestant church,” said lord Conway, sneeringly, “forbids, I think, a union between second cousins, but lays no restriction on those a degree nearer in blood—ridiculous! I laugh at the folly of such prohibitions; surely, Ada, you have more sense than to be trammelled by a law that has neither divine precept nor human policy to support it. It is obvious to me, that our mutual friends are desirous that we should marry; in fact, I have long known this; I will not answer for their motives being altogether disinterested; but for myself, and my own sentiments and feelings, I swear, if there is truth in man, it is yourself, Ada, not your wealth, I am anxious to possess; were you utterly destitute and portionless, your lovely person would, as now, be the object of my hope—I should be equally eager to secure your affection, and obtain your hand.”

“ Had your lordship made these professions in the presence of the friends you allude to,” returned Ada, “ I might have believed them prompted by the honourable spirit of sincerity ; I must have felt grateful for the preference given me, though I should then have declared the impossibility of accepting your hand.”

“ Beware, inexorable girl !” exclaimed lord Conway ; “ you know not what acts of desperation I may be driven to commit ; forbid me not to hope !”

“ My principles,” replied Miss Lambart, “ will not allow me to hold out a hope that I never intend, that I never can realize ; and be assured, that insult, persecution, and menace, are much more likely to excite hate than love.”

Lord Conway’s eyes flashed fire ; he bit his lip, till the blood started.—“ Yonder,” said he, “ are the party, returned from riding ; I do not chuse to be met by them, at a moment when your obstinate refusal of my love has rendered me unfit for idle conversation.”

Monsieur Lemain approached, to whisper the approach of the party dismounting

at the lodge. With the malignant look of a demon, lord Conway fixed his meteor eyes on the terrified Ada, as if he would read her most secret thoughts. Perceiving her turn pale, he bade Lemain proceed to the castle with all speed, and prepare his things, that he might dress—"I shall follow," said his lordship, "immediately."

Lemain bowed, and went on.

"I know not," resumed lord Conway, "I know not, Ada, how to believe you serious in the dislike you express of me, for I am not accustomed to sue in vain for female favour and approval; but if your disdainful refusal of my love proceeds from attachment to another, by all that is sacred! never will I allow that other to call you his—never, Ada; mark my words, for they will prove immutable as fate, never shall you give this hand to another while I have life." As he spoke, he released her hand, which he had tightly grasped, and threw himself over a gate, into a shrubbery that led to a back entrance into the castle.

Pale, trembling, and almost fainting, Miss Lambart sunk on the root of a tree,

to the great astonishment of Janet, who wondered how she could look so distressed and unhappy, when she had been walking with such a handsome young man as lord Conway, who, all the gentlemen and ladies at the second table had settled was to be her husband; which had been farther confirmed by the repeated asseverations of monsieur Lemain, that they were over head and ears in love with each other. It was not possible for Janet to doubt the opinion and word of monsieur; and she accounted for Miss Lambart's present situation, by supposing she had quarrelled with her lover, a matter she considered of no consequence, remembering that she had often heard—" *The quarrel of lovers was the renewal of love.*"

To the great relief of Miss Lambart, she found the equestrian party had not recognised her, but were advancing by a different path to the castle. Being much revived by the aid of Janet's smelling-salts, which she never went abroad without, because she had been told by Mrs. Sprucely, the honourable Mrs. Chatterton's waiting-gentlewoman, that it was monstrous gen-

teel, and vastly fashionable; to have tremors and delicate health, which she at every opportunity affected, though her rosy cheeks and ready laugh contradicted her assertions.

The intrusion of lord Conway made Miss Lambart resolve never again to visit Norah's cottage, without taking some person with her, to prevent the annoyance she had that morning endured from his presence; and she was most happy to reach the castle without further interruption.

The honourable colonel Lismore, though he had obtained the appellation of a male flirt, was in reality undeserving of so odious a character: no man more highly estimated the fair sex than he did, or was more ready to give them credit for virtue, and every amiable quality; but it had been his misfortune to meet with females whose portions scarcely supported their rank, yet whose beauty might have secured his heart, had they not betrayed the mortifying fact, that his rank and fortune gave him consequence in their eyes, and that to these alone he was indebted for their smiles and

preference. Was the happiness of a man's life to be sacrificed to a beautiful face? and was it wonderful that colonel Lismore, possessing sense, delicacy, and feeling, should withdraw his attentions, for he had made no professions, from such heartless, venal beings?—" *The very head and front of his offending had this extent, no more.*" The rich colonel Lismore, heir to a dukedom, was a welcome guest every where; but he had become wary and suspicious, and had made up his mind never to marry, unless he was fortunate enough to meet an artless unsophisticated creature, innocent and amiable, who loved him for himself alone; and in lady Indiana Corry he believed he had found the being formed to make him happy, for she was lovely, artless, and amiable; he beheld with secret approval the preference she always gave to the society of Miss Lambart and Miss Belmore, and how carefully she avoided being more than distantly polite to Miss Obrien. Every hour he discovered a new charm in the little fairy; and in her blushes, and unconscious expression of preference, he had the supreme felicity

to know that he had inspired in her young ingenuous heart a first tender sentiment. Innocent and sincere, he was certain that his rank and wealth had never been thought of, or calculated upon, by Indiana; her feelings had not been influenced by avarice or ambition, but with all the candour of innocence, unvitiated by the venal maxims of the world, she loved him for himself alone.

It was now plain to the comprehension of the earl of Drogheda, who that other was that his daughter had alluded to, in her letter to lord Cloghnickelty, whom she said she preferred to his nephew, the honourable Mr. Oxmantown; nor could he doubt the preference being mutual, for the watchful eye of the father had been warily observant of the behaviour of colonel Lismore, whose looks and attentions to lady Indiana Corry were not to be mistaken. Having expressed his ideas on the subject to his lady, she declared her approbation, by saying—"Sure then there can be no reasonable objection to the honourable colonel Lismore paying his addresses to Indy; for, not to mention his plentiful

fortune, that same heavy lump, Mr. Oxmantown, was not at all to be compared with him; faith now, it was no wonder that when the two stood before her eyes, Indy should prefer the colonel, for he is as lively as a bird, and handsome enough to be the son of a king."

"I care nothing at all for his person," replied Drogheda: "if Indy thinks him handsome, well and good; but faith now, honey, I care a great deal about his being a man of honour—sorrow to the heart of the scoundrel that should dare to treat Indy ill, for sure it is herself that is the pulse of her father's heart; but I have a better opinion of the principles of colonel Lismore—for is not he a soldier?"

"Sure it is himself that is all that, and a gentleman into the bargain," returned the countess of Drogheda; "and is not he the next heir to the duke, his uncle, who has no nearer relation at all at all; and faith now, little Indy stands a fair chance to be a duchess. But, Drogheda, honey, has colonel Lismore opened his heart to you—has he asked your consent to pay his addresses to Indy?"

“ Well then, you women are always in a devil of a hurry about settling these sort of matters,” said Drogheda; “ I remember you gave me no peace at all sure, till I told you my intention was to take you before the soggarth, and make a wife of you.”

“ And did I ever give you reason to repent the day you married me?” asked lady Drogheda: “ have not I been a loving and faithful wife to you, in fair weather and foul weather, in camp and in barracks, in war and in peace, in sickness and in health?”

“ Faith and you have, darling,” replied Drogheda; “ and I must be a big villain if I was after denying that you have been the most faithful comrade, the most careful tender nurse, and the truest kindest wife that ever marched by the side of a soldier through the skirmishes of life: but it is time enough, jewel, for Indy to marry—let us keep guard, as good sentinels ought to do, over her, and leave it to the colonel to make his proposal, without our hurrying him; for sure and sure now, matrimony requires a man to think seriously, before he ties a knot with his tongue that he

can never untie with his teeth; and Indy, you know, is but a child entirely; and though I wish her great luck in a husband, yet I am in no hurry sure to get rid of her, a vourneen."

The business of the toilet, so tedious with some females, occupied but a small portion of Miss Lambart's time; and before she descended to the drawing-room, she had leisure to reflect upon the incoherent expressions of lord Conway, and his declaration, that a very few days would enable him to clear up the ambiguity of his conduct.

"To me," thought Ada, "his explanation is of no sort of consequence, farther than the satisfaction it would afford me, to be certain he has not insulted me, and degraded himself by professions he did not wish, or intend to make public; but if the mystery of his conduct were developed this hour, and he proved himself, beyond the shadow of suspicion, sincere in his attachment to me, yet have I so rooted a belief that his principles are bad, and so perfect a knowledge that his temper is violent and revengeful, that he never would

be more to me than at this moment, my relation; but never my friend—never my husband.”

Her hurried walk, aided by agitation of mind, had given to Miss Lambart's cheek an unusual glow; and when she entered the drawing-room, sir Harry Ogle, who was himself “*point device in all his accoutrements*,” protested, upon his honour, she looked like a divinity.

“And what,” asked the countess of Vandeleur, in a whisper to the honourable Mrs. Carleton, “what does Miss O'Brien look like? She dresses of late most unbecomingly, and her person, though tolerable good, is not of the sort that looks, ‘*when unadorned, adorned the most.*’ That shawl of hers is certainly an expensive one; but it is very ugly, and she wears it everlastingly; she really looks quite a dowdy.”

“Sure and I believe she sleeps in it,” said lady Drogheda, “for I saw it about her last night, and she had it on when I met her on the lawn this morning.”

“It is an odious-looking thing,” resumed

the countess of Vandeleur, "and I should think it must be whim, and not ill health, induces her to wear it, for, in my opinion, Miss Obrien is getting *en bon point*; do not you think so, Mrs. Chatterton?"

Whatever 'were Mrs. Chatterton's thoughts, she did not chuse to reply to the countess of Vandeleur's question.— "That shawl," said she, "is my aversion; but Miss Obrien complains of chilliness, and a pain in her side, which she fancies would be increased, if she was to throw it off: it is her whim to act indisposition just now, but I dare say it will not last long."

"The sooner it is ended the better," returned the countess of Vandeleur, "for she looks an absolute fright in that everlasting shawl."

Sir Harry Ogle, to his infinite gratification, had the honour to conduct Miss Lambert to the *salle à manger*, and was permitted to occupy a seat next her at the dinner-table—a situation which he hoped would mortify Miss Belmore, to whom his attentions at table had hitherto been chiefly devoted.

Miss Lambart had too much sense and refinement, to be pleased with the shallow-brained sir Harry Ogle; but she exerted herself to convince lord Conway that his vanity had misled him in the suggestion that she was dejected. Breaking through the reserve that had hitherto prevented the display of her diversified powers of pleasing, she replied to sir Harry Ogle's flattery and attempts at wit, with graceful ease, and elegant *badinage*, joined to a brilliancy of spirit, that increased her beauty, and perfectly astonished lord Conway, whose flashing eyes were more frequently directed to the opposite side of the table than was agreeable to Miss O'Brien, for in his eagerness to listen to the conversation of sir Harry Ogle and Miss Lambart, he neglected to attend to her requests to be helped to the delicacies near him, and increased her suspicion that he was not as indifferent to his fair cousin as he wished to have it believed.

The smiles Miss Lambart bestowed on sir Harry Ogle were gall and wormwood to lord Conway, and so entirely destroyed

his appetite, that plate after plate was taken from before him untouched.

His chagrin did not pass unnoticed by the countess of Vandeleur; it was the confirmation of what she believed and hoped; and she mentally applauded what she considered a *ruse d'amour* on the part of her niece, who hoped, by appearing pleased with the nonsense of sir Harry Ogle, to excite his envy, and rouse him to jealousy.

When the ladies left the dining-room, Miss Belmore proposed a walk on the lawn.—“The evening,” said she, “is warm, and the yellow moon seems to invite us to quit the close atmosphere of the drawing-room, for fresh air, and the perfume of flowers.”

Miss Lambart led the way through the suit of apartments that ended in the conservatory. Having lingered a few moments to admire a variety of beautiful exotics, and inhale their odours, they passed under the arcade to the lawn.

“This is just such a beautiful moon light night,” observed lady Indiana Corry, “as when you, Miss Lambart, and lady Stella Savage, were reciting poetry, and a

voice you know startled us, by repeating some very pretty verses—you remember, do you not?”

“Not the poetry,” replied Ada, “but the circumstance, perfectly.”

“And for my part, I have always thought,” resumed Indiana, “that the reciter was lord Conway; for the voice was a very peculiar one, clear and full like his; but then, if it was his lordship, how strange that he should choose to remain so many days *incog.*!”

Miss Lambart had thought it strange also; for that it was lord Conway who had recited the verses, she was convinced; for his was a voice that once heard, was never to be forgotten; but there were other circumstances in his conduct, even more strange and unaccountable than the *incognito*; but of those she did not choose to speak; and to get rid of the subject, mentioned an excursion by water, which had been proposed by colonel Lismore.

“It is delightful to be on the water such a night as this,” said Miss Belmore, “particularly with a musical party: *apropos* of music—I am wild to learn that song.

you composed, Miss Lambart; will you oblige me by singing it?"

"With pleasure; and I assure you, I am much flattered by your notice of the *bagatelle*, which has only its simplicity to recommend it:—

The summer leaves are fresh and green
 Sweet roses now are glowing;
 And bright yon sloping banks between,
 The Liffey's course is flowing.
 But when the summer leaves decay,
 And roses droop and perish—
 When I from thee am far away,
 Wilt thou remembrance cherish?
 Wilt thou bestow a thought on me,
 When winter winds are raving,
 Whose constant heart will turn to thee,
 Whatever storms I'm braving?"

"*Bravo! bravissimo! dolci exquisitissimo!*" echoed from the conservatory; and "*encore! encore!*" was vociferated by sir Harry Ogle, who having taken more than his usual quantity of wine, appeared sufficiently elevated to be intrusive and disagreeable.

Miss Lambart took no notice of her applauders, but placing herself between Miss Belmore and lady Indiana Corry, led the way to a seat on the lawn.—"I recollect

last spring," said she, "that a nightingale used to warble among those rose-bushes."

"No nightingale," replied sir Harry Ogle, standing opposite, "can warble half so sweetly as you."

"Where is Miss O'Brien this heavenly night?" said colonel Lismore, seating himself on the grass, at lady Indiana's feet; "but now I remember, I have heard her say, moonlight is not to be endured, except in Italy."

"I pity her prejudice," observed Miss Belmore.

"And so do I," said lord Conway, advancing, "for see—

‘How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank’
 ————— — — — Look how the floor of heaven
 Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.”

"Can any one be so tasteless as to look with indifference on such a glorious night as this, and assert it can be excelled any where?" resumed colonel Lismore; "for my own part, I prefer the moonlit nights here in my own green Erin, to all I have ever seen abroad, even beyond the boasted splendour of Italian moonlight, when mu-

sic floats upon the Adriatic, aided by the song of the gondolieri."

"I do not think the nightingale has forsaken its favourite bower," observed Miss Belmore; "for it feeds on glow-worms—and look, they are now sparkling beneath these rose-trees."

"How much I should like to see a glow-worm!" exclaimed lady Indiana, rising, and following Miss Belmore.

Sir Harry Ogle immediately placed himself beside Miss Lambart, on the vacant seat.—"Is it possible," said he, "that any one can prefer the music of a nightingale, Miss Lambart, to the divine warblings of your voice? can any one compare a bird —"

"There is no comparison, certainly, sir Harry," interrupted Miss Lambart; "but these compliments are too commonplace; a man of your understanding should offer more refined praise to my vocal powers."

"I confess it; your dulcet voice, and your transcendent beauty, exceeds all praise. Oh, Miss Lambart! you have made a captive of my heart; and I, your

most humble slave, shall be for ever miserable, unless——”

“ I restore it,” interrupted Miss Lambart; “ to this, believe me, I accede with pleasure, having no wish to retain your heart, I promise you.”

“ No, celestial creature, no,” returned sir Harry, “ I do not wish the return of my heart—I request you to give me yours in exchange.”

“ Never put on a serious face, sir Harry, and attempt the pathetic,” said Miss Lambart; “ for it is extremely unbecoming, I assure you: if you intend to succeed with a lady, you must make love to her with a cheerful countenance.”

“ Doubtless I shall be all life and merriment, if you will accept my addresses—if you, charming Miss Lambart, will bid me hope to obtain your hand.”

“ In a dance, with all pleasure, sir Harry; for it is no flattery to say, you dance well. I have no objection to promise you my hand, the first time we meet in a ball-room.”

“ Fair creature, you wilfully mistake my meaning,” said sir Harry; “ I wish

you to honour me with your hand at the altar."

"I have no desire to be poisoned," replied Miss Lambart; "and how could I hope to escape, when I have heard you say so many females are in love with you; no, no, sir Harry; you are a gay deceiver, but I will not hazard my own existence, or have the heavy account of broken hearts brought against me, by accepting your addresses."

As she spoke, she attempted to quit her seat; but catching her sash, sir Harry pressed it to his heart and his lips, and begged she would not condemn him to despair, but permit him to endeavour to render himself agreeable.

"You are already sufficiently agreeable, no doubt," said she, laughing; "but you would be much more so, if you would release my sash."

"What would I not do, to prove my devotion to your slightest command!"

"Then I command you," said Miss Lambart, "never to mention the word love to me again, for it is a subject I have resolved never to listen to."

“ You will break this resolution, I am certain.”

“ Not in your favour, I most seriously assure you, sir Harry Ogle,” replied Miss Lambart : “ you have my answer,” added she, gravely ; “ and I request you will never renew the subject, unless you wish me to avoid you.”

Miss Lambart moved towards the group who were standing under the rose-bushes. Sir Harry Ogle stood astonished ; it was more than a minute before he recovered himself. To be refused by two females, both of whom he had fancied smitten with his person, and ready to be his whenever he thought proper to put the question, was mortification to his self-conceit, hard to be borne. While he stood mentally abusing and accusing the whole female sex of caprice and want of taste, he found himself left alone—another piece of excessive rudeness and disrespect shewn to his superlative merits.

But sir Harry Ogle was not constituted to die for love, or to suffer much from disappointment. Having vented his spleen in bitter execrations, he prudently resolv-

ed not to make himself uneasy at the refusals he had met.—“It is time enough for me to commence Benedict when I reach the sober age of thirty, and I have yet four years to look about me.” With this consoling thought, sir Harry Ogle strode into the hall, singing—

“Chloe smiles, but smiles in vain,
And puts on all her graces;
Love shall never give me pain,
I laugh at pretty faces.”

Before he reached the drawing-room, he encountered lord Conway.

“Well,” said his lordship, “you have had a long, and I took care it should be an uninterrupted opportunity of disclosing your passion to Miss Lambart; shall I congratulate you on your success?”

“I really do not understand what there is so ridiculous about me,” replied sir Harry, pettishly; “but it strikes me, Miss Lambart has been laughing at me; and, upon my honour, if she has, I think her behaviour prodigiously rude, and I ought to——”

“Send her a challenge—is that what you think you ought to do?”

“Your lordship is merry,” resumed sir Harry; “but for my part, I am rather inclined to be serious.”

“Has she then rejected you?” asked lord Conway.

“Yes, and in a way——’Pen my honour, women are strange animals; they do not appear to know their own minds: I declare I do not understand their whims and caprices; but no matter—Miss Lambart will be mistaken if she thinks I shall not survive her rejection.”

“Pshaw, man, never lose your temper,” said lord Conway, pleased to discover that Ada had merely been amusing herself with the vanity and folly of the little fop; “cheer up, and console yourself with the thought, that there are plenty of females, who would be sensible of your merits and attractions; I have seen one cast tender looks upon you—but perhaps you would object to a widow.”

“Not if she was rich; for, seriously speaking, it is a most confounded bore to be tied to a woman, unless she has wealth enough to compensate a man for his loss of liberty.”

“ Mrs. Chatterton is rich, tolerable well looking, and not much above forty—what do you think of her ?”

“ I think,” replied sir Harry, “ she has a bad-shaped large hand and ugly nails, green eyes, and yellow teeth ; and, worse than all, she is an eternal talker.”

“ But then she has a noble income, dresses well, and has an air *distingue*. The beauty of a wife is but a minor consideration ; and as to her tongue—it must be a husband’s own fault, if he has more of her conversation than is pleasant to him.”

Sir Harry protested he should be in no hurry to enter into matrimony ; but, notwithstanding this assertion, when he entered the drawing-room, instead of joining the juvenile party, he seated himself near the table at which the countess of Vandeleur and the honourable Mrs. Chatterton were playing piquet. By candle-light the little widow did not look more than thirty.—“ I wish she did not talk so much,” thought sir Harry ; “ but I am devilish poor, and she has plenty of the needful ; and as to her tongue, why I can

wish her good day when it wearies and annoys me.

CHAP. III.

————— I paused
To look upon her, and her kindled cheek ;
Her large black eyes, that flash'd through her long hair
As it stream'd o'er her ; her blue veins, that rose
Along her most transparent brow ; her nostril
Dilated from its symmetry ; her lips
Apart —————

Waved arms, more dazzling with their own horn whiteness
Than the steel her hand held. *Byron's Sardanapalus.*

" Man, I have lov'd you ; 'tis not in words to tell
How much, how deeply I have lov'd . 'tis past,
And now my soul has but one passion, one
Desire ; revenge, great as my injuries."

These lips are mute, these eyes are dry,
But in my breast and in my brain,
Awake the pangs that pass not by,
The thought that ne'er shall sleep again.
My soul nor deigns nor dares complain,
Though grief and passion there rebel ;
I only know I lov'd in vain—
I only feel—farewell !—farewell !

BYRON.

SOME days had elapsed, and the promised explanation had not been given by lord

Conway, whose temper, never good, and seldom serene, now appeared more irritable than ever; to Miss Lambart, who had attached but little credit to his assertions, the delay caused neither concern nor disappointment, farther than it more fully proved to her the depravity of his principles, and the detestable profligacy of his conduct, in professing a violent love for her, when it was glaringly obvious that Miss O'Brien had obtained such an ascendancy over him, that proud and unbending as he was, even to those whose years and rank demanded his respect, he seemed to assent to her opinions, and conform to her whims, at the same time that he was contradictory and almost rude to others.

The illness of the earl of Vandeleur, which, at its commencement, had been, for reasons before explained, a matter of satisfaction to the countess rather than regret, was now regarded with displeasure and impatience; she absolutely trembled as she contemplated the not impossible termination of her son's folly; he seemed to her to be under the influence of a spell, that bound him to the side of Miss O'Brien.

she had hoped that pride, if not interest, would have pointed out to him the policy of rendering himself agreeable to his cousin, and the unpardonable impropriety of attaching himself to Miss Obrien, in rank and fortune so very inferior to Miss Lambart; but every day convinced the countess that there was a mesh wove round Alfred, which would, if not speedily broken, end in an alliance which was hateful to think of. The bare idea of her son, the heir of the earl of Vandeleur, marrying Charlotte Obrien, whose mother was the daughter of a corn-factor, was terrible to her pride; and to prevent this disgraceful blot on the dignity of the family escutcheon, the countess now most heartily wished for the convalescence of her lord, who by menacing Alfred with cutting off a large unentailed portion of property from him and his heirs for ever, might induce him to shake off his degrading infatuation, and render him conformable to their wish that he should make an alliance suitable to his rank, and the dignity of a noble house.

“The experiment must be tried,” said the countess to the honourable Mrs. Carleton, who had become the unwilling confidant of her dislike of Miss Obrien; “I fancied Alfred was only acting the lover to this artful, disagreeable girl, merely to prove the state of Ada’s affections; but I fear I have suffered my hopes to mislead my judgment; the boy is actually fascinated by the insidious arts of this siren; but I shall find means to disappoint her ambitious project of allying herself to the countess of Vandeleur.”

The honourable Mrs. Carleton did not mention the suspicion of the countess Drogheda, which, if true, would bring trouble too soon; and it was the temper of this lady to promote peace, but never to foment discord. Happy would it be for the peace of many families, if their acquaintance and inmates would all act upon the same harmonious system!

The countess had now, dreading the defeat of her darling scheme, become in earnest anxious for the recovery of the earl; but the gout had not only greatly weakened his frame, but his physicians declared

he had a complication of disorders, and that it was necessary to keep his mind perfectly tranquil, as the least agitation might prove fatal to him, in his debilitated state: the knowledge that the life of the earl was considered so extremely precarious, made the countess more impatient to compel her son to break off with Miss O'Brien, for she was certain the death of his father, and the expiration of his minority, to which only a few weeks was wanting, would place him beyond her authority and control: the thought of Charlotte O'Brien being the wife of her son, the future countess of Vandeleur, was not to be borne; it haunted her day and night; it was a much deeper affliction than the probable death of her husband; it kept her for long hours waking on her pillow, till she came to the resolve, that the long-cherished scheme of uniting Alfred and Ada should not be relinquished, without an effort on her part to bring about its accomplishment; and as the earl was not in a situation to attend to what so deeply concerned the honour and inte-

rest of his son, she determined to demand, without further delay, the meaning of his attention to Miss Obrien: quitting her apartment, with an intention of taking her son to task, she heard him in angry expostulation with the hated subject of her thoughts, as they stood on the marble stairs that led to the hall. Curiosity induced the countess to pause; and as she leaned over the balustrade, she heard lord Conway say—"I cannot raise the money just now; you must apply to your own funds, or borrow from Mrs. Chatterton."

"I might equally as well hope to extract gold from the marble on which I stand, as from her," replied Miss Obrien; "and as to my own money, you know it is placed out of my power, till I am of age."

"I am certain you can have no actual want of cash," said lord Conway, "and you only ask it to torment me."

"I want many things, and positively must have money," returned Miss Obrien; "without which it will be impossible for me to remove with Mrs. Chatterton; and indeed I think it will be at the hazard——"

Of what, the countess could not hear,

for the ringing of a bell had caused the speakers to pass on, leaving her in astonishment. An intimacy of a very particular nature, it was evident, subsisted between lord Conway and Miss Obrien, but whether honourable or dishonourable, was to be ascertained. Determined to be satisfied immediately, she returned to her dressing-room, and despatched Mrs. Blandy to summon lord Conway to her presence; but after waiting, in a ferment of suspicion, impatience, and vexation, for some time, Mrs. Blandy returned, to say that lord Conway had rode out, and had left word he should not return to dinner.

Starting from her seat, with a precipitance that frightened Mrs. Blandy, the countess left the room, to seek the offending Miss Obrien, resolved to be kept in the dark no longer respecting the mysterious *liaison* she had formed with lord Conway, and to insist on her explaining at once, upon what plea, or by what right, she made a pecuniary claim upon him, a measure which appeared to her equally incomprehensible and indelicate; but in passing an open window, she saw she could

not at that time obtain the satisfaction she desired, for Miss Obrien was walking in the park with sir Harry Ogle. To apply to the honourable Mrs. Chatterton she thought useless, for she either was, or pretended to be, absolutely ignorant of Miss Obrien's proceedings, and utterly excluded from her secrets.

Returning to her dressing-room, the countess had time, while preparing for dinner, to cool and reflect; and before the second bell had given its invitation to the *salle-à-manger*, she had considered it would be most decorous to let the matter rest till the return of lord Conway, when she would put the business beyond the power of evasion or subterfuge, by having the culprits face to face, and declaring the conversation she had overheard.

At table the countess of Vandeleur did not condescend to notice Miss Obrien, who repaid her neglect with supercilious looks, and smiles of contempt.

Altogether, the dinner passed off very dull, which, to compliment the countess, sir Harry Ogle protested, upon his honour, was entirely owing to the absence

of lord Conway. Be this as it might, every one seemed glad when they were at liberty to separate; and none more so than Miss Lambart, who, feeling safe in the absence of lord Conway, wrapped her shawl about her, and took a solitary walk to the spot she had named the Nightingale's Bower, where, seating herself on a rustic bench, she waited to hear the warbling of the

*"Sweet bird, that shuns the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy."*

But not a note met her ear; her thoughts were sad: the evening breeze felt cold, and she drew her shawl more closely round her. A rustling noise among the acacias made her look behind her, but she only saw the tall shrubs bending their heads, and the moonbeams quivering on their leaves, as they moved at the mysterious bidding of the wind. The scene around her, far as her eye could reach, seemed to repose in tranquil beauty; but the heart of Ada felt uneasy sensations of sorrow, as she thought of her orphan state, and how destitute she should be of a real friend, when it pleased Heaven to remove the

baroness Wandesford, at that time near eighty, to a better world. Her parents she had never known, but she wished she had died with them ; for though the heiress of their immense wealth, she saw it possible to be unhappy, though surrounded by riches. With the countess of Vandeleur her heart felt no sympathy ; to the worldly maxims by which she was governed she never could conform ; from her pride and ambition she could take no example ; nor could she ever respect, confide in, or consider her in the light of a true friend. It was certain the countess of Vandeleur was a woman of unblemished reputation ; she was worshipped as the queen and patroness of fashion, taste, and elegance ; her house was the temple of luxury, abounding with every expensive adornment, with all that could please the eye and gratify the taste of the refined, the fastidious, and the indolent ; her parties were composed of persons of the first rank, the chief of whom seemed to have no business in life but to murder time in the idle pursuits of pleasure : dress, play, eating, drinking, and frivolous conversation, occupied their time from morn-

ing till night.—“Ought the life of a rational responsible being to be devoted to pursuits that enervate the mind, and finally eradicate every virtue?” thought Ada; “and is the Circe who fascinates with these debasing enchantments, who exists but to be flattered, admired, and followed, a proper guardian for a creature young and inexperienced as myself, on whose mind is impressed the strong conviction that I was endued with reasoning faculties, for a better purpose than to subscribe to the vices, and imitate the follies of those around me, and that wealth was bestowed upon me, not to throw away and dissipate in useless toys and glittering baubles, but to relieve the indigent, to reward merit, to assist the unfortunate, to comfort the bereaved widow, and support the fatherless?”

Again a rustling near her startled Ada, and fearful that lord Conway, having returned, might be making his way to her through the bushes, she rose from her seat, with an intention to fly from so disagreeable an encounter; but her robe caught on a rose-tree, and while she was disen-

gaging it from the thorns, a tall female stood before her, who, in a foreign accent, bade her stay.

Ada fearfully raised her eyes at this command, for it was not the tone of entreaty. The dress of the stranger was that of an Italian peasant; her figure was graceful, her features beautiful; but her large dark eyes had too much of the fierce expression of lord Conway's to be looked upon without dread; there was in them a terrible brightness, that flashed stern and wild as she uttered, "Stay."

"If you are in want," said Ada, timidly offering her purse, "this will relieve your present necessities; if you require refreshment, that path leads to the servants' offices, who have the earl of Vandeleur's orders to suffer no stranger to quit the gates of Doneraile Castle hungry or thirsty."

"I am no beggar," replied the stranger, scornfully putting aside the trembling hand that presented the purse; "I know but little of your language; can you speak Italian? for I have much to say that you must hear."

"At present I cannot listen to you,"

replied Ada, "but to-morrow come to the castle, and——"

"You must, you shall hear me now," interrupted the stranger, seizing her arm, and dragging her back to the bench she had quitted. — "To-morrow!" repeated she, with a frantic laugh; "ay, that was his word—to-morrow I will come; but he came not—he consigned me to perpetual penance and confinement—he deserted me; but I have crossed the stony defile, the rugged mountain, and the stormy sea, to seek him—to teach him how a woman can avenge her injuries."

"Of whom do you speak?" asked Ada, a fearful suspicion glancing on her mind; "who has injured you?"

"Lord Conway," replied the stranger, "the proud heir of yonder stately castle; it was he who wooed me with tender words and sweet persuasions—who swore to love me while he had existence—yes, it was lord Conway who won my young heart, and destroyed my innocence and peace.—Before he came to my native valley, I laboured all day, and was content—I slept tranquilly and sweetly on my hum-

ble pallet, and rose with the sun to milk our goats and spin the cotton for our garments—I was happy, though I was the drudge of a harsh and sordid mother, for at sunset I bound my dark tresses with garlands of flowers, wishing for no richer gems, and danced on the green margin of the lake with my young companions, and my laugh and my song spoke the cheerfulness of my heart; but when I saw lord Conway, a change came over me—I was no longer satisfied with my condition, or content to labour, for he called me beautiful; he said I was not suited to a peasant's life, or fit for the rude occupations in which he saw me employed—his flattery made me proud and idle—I despised the humble cabin in which I was born—I detested the mean garments in which I was clad—and I rebelled against the command of my mother, whom I had hitherto obeyed without demur or contradiction: but a cloud, dark as that which now crosses the moon, had fallen upon my spirit, the precursor of gloom and tempest. Yet had he then left me, though I should have grieved for a time, I might have forgotten

his flatteries, I might have returned again to my goats, to my reel, and been happy with my former companions; but he bought me of my unnatural parent for a purse of gold, and I gladly consented to go with him from my native valley. Yes, I left my young companions, all that had once been dear to me, without regret, for I was going to reside with him, whom my fancy painted the best and the most beautiful of human kind. Lord Conway placed me in a splendid palace, where I was instructed to adorn my person, to move gracefully in the dance, and join my voice to the soft notes of the lute and mandolin. Would that my attainments had rested there! but wo for me, I was taught to read; books brought reflection, and I felt and knew the value of the virtue I had lost, and the degradation into which I had fallen."

"Unhappy creature! from my soul I pity you," said Ada; "but, alas! I fear you have little to hope from the justice or humanity of your seducer."

"I have neither hope nor expectation but of revenge," replied the stranger:

"look not impatient—my tale is almost told."

"To-morrow I will hear the rest, to-morrow," returned the deeply-affected and agitated Ada; "suffer me now to depart."

"Remain," said the stranger, sternly; "to-morrow is a word of deep and fatal import; what know you of to-morrow? can you be certain you shall see to-morrow? the sun will shine, and the blue sky canopy the earth to-morrow, but your eyes may not behold them; they may be closed in death."

"Most true," replied Ada, her blood chilling at the deep tone and wild look of the stranger, whose gaze was fixed upon her, "most true; life and death are at the disposal of the Almighty, and we know not how soon we may be summoned hence."

"Be still then, and hear me," resumed the stranger: "I beheld with horror the snare into which love had led me; my dishonour preyed upon my spirits; I became pale, languid, and melancholy, and the holy father to whom I made confession,

told me I was in the road to perdition ; he bade me fast, pray, and repent, and refused to absolve me, unless I forsook my sin. My lost condition frenzied my brain ; I knelt at the feet of lord Conway, I told him all the anguish of my heart, the fearful doom I had been menaced with, and I implored him to restore me to self-esteem, to make me his wife, that I might continue to love and reside with him, without incurring the peril of my immortal soul."

Ada wept convulsively.

" You weep for me," resumed the stranger ; " but he laughed at my distress, he scoffed at my religious fears, he ridiculed my remorse, and called my confessor a canting meddling hypocrite, who, if I would offer him a few pieces of gold, would sell me indulgence and absolution."

" This is too horrible," said Ada ; " I beseech you let me go."

" Not yet, not yet—be patient, and you shall be released," said the stranger ; " it is to free you from the monster, to separate you for ever, I am here."

The arm of Ada was in the grasp of the stranger ; she could not fly, and the

distance from the castle would prevent her voice being heard, should she cry for assistance. That the stranger was insane, she had no doubt, and while she trembled for her life, she was compelled to listen to her ravings.

“ I clung to the knees of lord Conway,” continued the stranger, “ I entreated him to marry me, but with a look of disdain he shook me off, and haughtily bade me remember the immeasurable distance between a high-born nobleman and a peasant girl, whose person he had purchased with his gold, and honoured by taking to his bed.”

“ Tell me no more,” said Ada ; “ if you have mercy, if you have pity——”

“ I once had both,” resumed the stranger, “ but they are now extinct in my heart. Pity, mercy, neither was shewn to me. I spoke of my injuries, of the vengeance of offended Heaven ; but he bade me restrain the insolence of my speech, and leave him to settle his accounts with Heaven as it best suited his opinions and belief ; he sternly bade me trouble him no more with artful representations of a

wounded conscience, for he was convinced my tears, and well-acted agonies, were employed to bring about the ambitious design I had formed of winning him to marry me; ‘but the saintly father who has set you on this extravagant scheme,’ said lord Conway, ‘will find I am not so mean in spirit, or so weak in understanding, as to sacrifice my fame, and share my title, with her who has forfeited all claim to the world’s respect, and whose proudest boast is a tolerable person.’ I shrieked, I tore my hair,” continued the stranger, “as I heard the destroyer of my virtue thus insult me; but with barbarous coldness he bade me not deprive myself of my chief charm—‘Preserve those raven tresses,’ said he, ‘to attract another lover when I am gone, which will shortly be the case; for to be plain with you, Ianthe, I am recalled to my own country, where I was affianced in infancy, to a bride of equal rank and fortune with myself.’—‘You cannot,’ said I, ‘you will not be so base as to abandon me.’—‘I will take care you shall not want the necessaries of life; I leave you now to recollect your own

lowly condition, and my lofty one,' said lord Conway; 'and when you are reasonable enough to confess your folly, and sufficiently humble to acknowledge the honour I have done you, by taking you from a life of drudgery and poverty, I may be induced to pardon your presumption, and take you again to my favour.'—
'Never, perfidious villain,' said I—'never;' and with this dagger," drawing a shining steel from her bosom, and holding it above her head, "with this sharp instrument, which I had purchased to put an end to my own miserable life, I attempted to stab him."

"Merciful Heaven pardon you the wicked intention!" exclaimed Ada, shuddering.

"Evading the blow," resumed the stranger, "he dashed me violently on the floor, where I remained I know not how long, stunned and insensible. When I recovered recollection, I found myself laid on a couch in my own apartment, and my attendant, Nonna, binding up a gash in my arm, which had been made by the dagger, on which I had happily fallen—

yes, I repeat happily, for thus it remained concealed from the eye of lord Conway, and continued in my possession. About an hour had elapsed, when I heard a carriage drive into the court-yard, and supposing it to be that kept for my use, I desired Nonna to go and dismiss it.—‘No more operas for me,’ said I; ‘music was once my delight, but woe for me, my heart is now out of tune, my thoughts are all discord and confusion.’ In a few moments Nonna returned, and presented a billet; it was addressed to Ianthe; I knew the characters; they were lord Conway’s.—‘Here,’ continued the stranger, placing a paper in the trembling hand of Ada, ‘here is the written record of his unequalled treachery; behold the evidence of falsehood, of baseness;—read, and be convinced that he is a cold-hearted, systematic villain.’

Ada saw the dagger gleaming in the moonlight, and she dreaded to oppose the will of the insane creature that held its point towards her; but a mist was before her eyes; she could not discern a letter, and she fearfully said—“By this light I am unable to read.”

“ Give it to me,” replied the stranger, snatching the billet from the icy fingers of Ada ; “ to me the characters are flame, and I could read them, though the moon were hid, and not a star was seen in the heavens.”

As she spoke, her large dark eyes fell on the paper, and in a tone of bitterness she read.—“ Ianthe, I am willing to believe the artful representations of your confessor have disordered your brain, and impelled you to an act which I am persuaded you now deeply repent ; influenced by this belief, I pardon the atrocious attempt you made upon my life, and will forget it, provided you suffer Benito to conduct you immediately to the villa Roseda, where the cool air will be of service to your health, and repose will tranquillize your spirits. Nonna may attend you, and to-morrow I will come to you, with the hope that you will be as wishful as myself for reconciliation. Adieu till to-morrow evening, when you shall find that your remonstrances and representations have had due effect ; that I am not regardless of your soul’s peace, but have resolved to restore you to virtue.”

“What could I believe,” said the stranger, as she crushed the billet together, “but that he repented my seduction, and designed to repair the ~~injury~~ injury he had done me by the sacred rite of marriage, for by no other means did it appear to me that he could satisfy my upbraiding conscience, and restore me to peace. Fool! credulous fool! to be again deceived; I pressed the billet to my lips, and shed over it tears of transport. Nonna hastily collected a few necessary articles of apparel, and I joyfully departed for the villa Roseda, a little romantic place Lord Conway had lately hired, a retreat from the sultry heat of summer, when it became fashionable to prefer nature, in her beautiful simplicity, to crowded assemblies and conversaziones.

“The way seemed rough and tedious, but it was beguiled by Benito’s description of the groves and fountains that enriched the domain to which we were travelling. The sun had sunk, and the evening had set in heavy and gloomy, when a sudden turn in the road, which had wound between two hills, brought us close to the ponderous gates of a monastery. Here, to

my astonishment and consternation, the carriage stopped, and I was forced, in spite of my shrieks and resistance, to enter a dismal apartment, where, as I cast my eyes despairingly around, I beheld only frightful figures carved in black oak, and narrow grated casements, that seemed as if they were designed to exclude, rather than admit, the cheerful rays of the sun. Here I was left alone with Benito, while Nonna was conducted to the presence of the abbess, to whom she was the bearer of lord Conway's instructions respecting me.

“ In the mean time, Benito, invested with full powers by my betrayer, insolently informed me, that lord Conway would never see me more; but that believing my brain was unsettled, he pardoned my wicked attempt on his life, and had generously provided an asylum for me in the convent, to which I had by his orders been safely conducted, where I was to remain during life, and where his lordship trusted I should recover peace and virtue; that my outrageous conduct had only precipitated our parting, for in a few days lord Conway would quit Italy for ever;

and as it was impossible to make me the companion of his travels, his lordship being about to return immediately to his own country, to fulfil a matrimonial engagement, it was best we should separate at once.

“ It matters not to relate the reproaches I poured upon my treacherous attendants, by whom I was left to rave and lament too late my credulity and desertion. When I arrived at the convent, I had a costly diamond cross, suspended from my neck, and bracelets of gold, clasped with diamonds, on my arms; these I contrived to conceal from the rapacious abbess. With two of the diamonds, which I picked from the bracelets, I bribed the gardener of the convent to assist my escape, and convey me back to Milan; but my purpose was utterly disappointed; for when I reached the palace I had so lately inhabited, I found it shut up, and learned that lord Conway had departed for France—‘ I will follow the perfidious monster,’ said I, ‘ to the farthest extremity of the globe!’

“ Stimulated by the revenge I determined to obtain, I overcame incredible dif-

ficulties; despising peril and fatigue, I traced him to Paris; but the toils and privations I had endured were too much for my strength: I was taken ill; and the people where I lodged believing that my last hour was approaching, sent for a priest, to whom, believing myself dying, I made confession of all my errors, and the desperate motive that had brought me from my own country to Paris. From the priest I learned, that he had performed the rite of marriage, between lord Conway and a country-woman of his own, a young lady of high rank, and extraordinary beauty, with whom he had, some weeks before, returned to Ireland. The priest endeavoured to console my griefs, and soothe my bursts of agony, by advising me to seek consolation in religion; and he offered, should I recover, to place me in a convent, where, under the mild government of its abbess, I might repent my sins, be forgiven, and recover peace and self-respect. Contrary to my own hopes, I did recover, and with health came the recollection of my injuries, and a deeper, stronger desire and resolve of revenge. As soon as I was

able to go abroad, I sold more of my diamonds; and after suffering shipwreck on a distant part of the coast, I have wandered hither."

"Not to commit murder!" said Ada, shrinking from the flashing eye of the stranger. "No, as you hope to be forgiven, though lord Conway has deceived and abandoned you, do not perpetrate a deed that will provoke Heaven to forsake you: none are absolutely miserable, who dare hope for Heaven's mercy and forgiveness. Let not your own act sever this blessed hope from your soul; forbear to nourish a revengeful spirit; be advised, I entreat you—devote not yourself to irremediable wretchedness; consent to return to your own country, and I will secure to you the ample means of life; I am rich, and how can I better employ my wealth, than by reclaiming error, and providing for the misled and unfortunate? Do not doubt my word, for I feel for, and pity you. Only promise me you will return to Italy, and to-morrow——"

"Again to-morrow!" interrupted Ianthe,

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fiercely—"to-morrow! that accursed word decides your doom. You feel for and pity me! No, no, you tremble for your husband's life, and wish me gone, because——"

"My husband!" repeated Ada. "No, Heaven in mercy forbid that I should ever be the wife of that bad man; lord Conway is not my husband."

"Dare you, who look so innocent, assert in the face of Heaven such falsehoods? Answer me," said Ianthe. "Have I not seen you hanging on his arm, and gazing on his face? Yes, yes, I recognise you well, by the shawl wrapped closely round you—by——"

"Indeed, indeed you are mistaken," interrupted Ada; "lord Conway is——"

"Your husband—your beloved husband."

"No, on my soul," returned Ada: "do not brandish over me that frightful dagger; do not grasp my arm; release me, I entreat you."

"Lord Conway loves you," said Ianthe. "for you are beautiful and virtuous; you are the happy one to whom he was affianced in childhood—his adored wife. Here then begins my vengeance. De-

prived of you, his heart will feel the unutterable pangs that mine has felt from his abandonment, and he will mourn the loss of all he loves, as I have mourned, without hope. Are you prepared to die?"

"For pity, for mercy's sake, do not murder me! I have never offended you, in thought or act," said Ada, beseechingly: "suffer me to depart unharmed, and I will plead for you with lord Conway, and I swear, by all my hopes of happiness hereafter, I will place you beyond the reach of want."

"The dead have no wants," replied Ianthe, solemnly; "and this broken heart, this wo-worn frame, will shortly rest, where poverty is not felt, where love, and guilt, and revenge, are all forgotten. Do you not believe," continued she, gazing on the sky, "that those glittering stars are worlds, where souls, purified from earthly defilement, dwell with seraphs and angels in perpetual happiness?"

"Such belief," said Ada, "is not unreasonable. Doubtless the wise and beneficent Creator of the universe formed them

for purposes of more importance than that of shedding a feeble light upon our earth."

"Do you not long," asked Ianthé, "to reach those realms of glory? Speak! are you prepared to die?"

Ada understood a dreadful meaning in the question of the stranger, who with one hand still firmly grasped her, while the other raised the dagger above her bosom; terror chilled her blood, as her ear again caught the ominous words—"Are you prepared to die?"

"Spare me, I beseech you!" supplicated the terrified Ada. "I am not the wife of lord Conway; you have been deceived with a false tale: he is not married. Do not add the dreadful guilt of murder to your soul's guilt; have pity, and spare me."

"Your words are false as his; be silent, for you plead in vain; you are lord Conway's wife, the beloved of his heart, and for that you die: had he betrayed and deserted you, I might have pitied, I might have——Hark! I hear distant footsteps; they come this way; I must be quick; commend your soul to Heaven; this is your last moment!"

Ada shrieked aloud for help; but she shrieked in vain, for the arm of the vindictive Ianthe inflicted two wounds in the shoulder of the innocent victim of her vengeance, whom she left bleeding and insensible on the grass where she had fallen.

In this situation Miss Lambart was found by two of the earl of Vandeleur's servants, who were returning from merry-making in the village, when they heard shrieks, and hastened to the spot from whence the cries came, to learn what terrible event had occurred: the men beheld, and raised from the earth a female form, and with concern and alarm discovered it was Miss Lambart, her white robe steeped in blood, and to all appearance she was dying. Too feeble to reply to their questions, she was carried by the men to the castle, where instantly all was confusion and dismay. The earl of Vandeleur's surgeon and physician were fortunately in attendance upon him, and by their direction Miss Lambart was undressed and placed in bed, where her wounds were examined; these were pronounced deep, but

not absolutely dangerous, provided a fever could be kept off, which was greatly to be apprehended, from her having lain on the damp grass, and having been exposed to the night air.

Shocked and concerned at the situation of Miss Lambart, all the gentlemen, and most of the servants, went over the park, and through the shrubberies, where the dogs were sent into the bushes and thickets, but no trace of a robber was to be found; a strict search was made round the Nightingale's Bower, which was known to be a favourite seat of Miss Lambart; and here sir Harry Ogle picked up the billet written by lord Conway to Ianthé, which, in her haste to escape, she had dropped: its perusal gave colonel Lisimore a suspicion that the wounds inflicted on Miss Lambart had not been given by a robber; and in this opinion he was confirmed, by its being ascertained that her purse, her watch, and the pearls she wore on her neck, were all safe, which proved that she had not suffered by the hand of a robber.

At present, all was inexplicable mystery, for Ada had swallowed an opiate,

and lay so pale and so still, that the deeply-afflicted Janet, as she sat weeping beside her pillow, declared her belief that she would never speak again, for she looked the very picture of death.

The earl of Vandeleur's increasing maladies had rendered him as weak as infancy, and it was considered proper to keep him ignorant of this dreadful and mysterious event.

Lord Conway had left home in the morning; no one knew whither he was gone: it was now night, and he was not returned, which the countess of Vandeleur declared was extremely strange and vexatious, particularly at that time. The countess of Vandeleur always abhorred sick chambers and dismal faces; without feeling the least sympathy or sorrow for any human being except herself, she discovered just then that she was the most unhappy woman in the world, and the only consolation that presented itself, in her present moment of trouble and distress, was derived from the reflection, that if Miss Lambart died before she was of age to make a will, a large portion of her

estates would devolve on her cousin, lord Conway.

Early the next morning, Miss Lambart was seized with fever and delirium: in her ravings she frequently mentioned Milan, and the names of lord Conway and Ianthe; shrieking for help, she would entreat for her life, and call on the baroness Wandesford to save her from the libertine designs of lord Conway, and the dagger of Ianthe.

About middle day, lord Conway returned on foot to the castle, his clothes soiled, torn, and disordered; his looks pale, and his eyes heavy, as if he had not slept the preceding night, and was exhausted with fatigue. When informed of the mysterious attempt that had been made on the life of Miss Lambart, and the dangerous state in which she then lay, he clasped his hands in agony, and exclaimed—"What a horrible mistake!"

"You then can explain the meaning of this terrible affair," said the honourable Mrs. Chatterton. "I am sure we shall all be extremely glad to learn——"

"From me," interrupted lord Conway,

“ you will learn nothing. Oh, fiend ! fiend !” As he spoke, he rushed like a maniac from the room, leaving the honourable Mrs. Chatterton astonished and offended.

“ Excessively rude and provoking !” said she. “ Fiend ! Was it me he meant, I wonder ? Fiend ! Vastly ill-bred and vulgar, to call names. Well, Doneraile Castle is become a monstrous disagreeable place, and I shall be heartily glad when I turn my back upon it. Fiend indeed ! I always disliked lord Conway, but now I hate him worse than ever.”

Without seeing his mother, or inquiring after the state of the earl his father, lord Conway retired to bed, giving strict orders that no one should approach his chamber till he rung his bell.

The maternal fears and anxiety of the countess of Vandeleur respecting the safety of her son, being perfectly tranquillized by monsieur Lemain’s information that his lordship had returned home, and had retired to bed, to obtain a few hours repose — “ Repose !” repeated the countess, “ why

what is the matter with him, monsieur, that he requires repose at this time of the day? is lord Conway ill? I protest I am harassed to death; one trouble after another is enough to turn one's brain; why the castle will be an absolute lazaretto; answer me immediately—what is the matter with lord Conway?"

"Noting, miladi, noting, only a littel bit fatigue," replied Lemain: "*en verité*, milor he vill sleep for de hour or two, den he vill get up quite vell; noting at all de matter vid him, miladi; only he not go to bed last night, so in consequence he feel de languor, de tire, dat is all; milor is not *malade*—not sick, miladi."

"And pray, monsieur, what prevented his going to bed?" asked the countess; "where, and with whom, did lord Conway pass the night?"

Lemain shrugged his shoulders—"Milor keep his own secret in his own breast," said he; "I know noting of vere he go, or vere he stay de night."

"And if you did, I should gain but little information from you," returned the countess; "you are too well paid to be-

tray his confidence. You may retire, monsieur; and when lord Conway gets up, be pleased to let him know I wish to see him in my dressing-room."

Lemain bowed himself to the door, where he ran against Mrs. Blandy, and almost threw her down, as she was coming in haste to report having learnt in the servants' hall, that all the visitors were intending to take their leave, supposing that the afflicting state of the earl of Vandeleur and Miss Lambart would render their stay inconvenient, and troublesome to the countess.

"Exactly the way of the world; Blandy," exclaimed the countess; "you see what a set of hollow-hearted, unfeeling beings, these people are, that I lavish invitations upon; mere summer friends, that are all smiles, compliment, and kindness, while the sun shines, and their pleasures are uninterrupted, but fly off the moment they see a cloud upon the sky. No, no, Blandy, they are not afraid of being troublesome to me; the fact is, they shrink from the task of endeavouring to soothe and lighten my trouble. So, so," conti-

nued she, beating the carpet with her foot, "it is come to this at last, is it? after being courted, and persuaded to believe I conferred honour and obligation on those I condescended to notice, and honour with invitations to my house, I shall be deserted in the hour of misfortune; my pretended friends will leave me alone to nurse the sick and the insane; and my servants, I suppose, will follow their example, and grow weary of this melancholy place. Heaven help me! I have a pleasant prospect before me—I meet with nothing but deceit and ingratitude!"

"Dear me, my lady, how can you give way to such groundless apprehensions?" said Mrs. Blandy; "I am certain you wrong your friends, by suspecting them of unkindness; and as to your servants, they have too much regard and respect——"

"For themselves perhaps, Blandy," interrupted the countess; "they think they could not better their situations, or they would have little consideration for my affliction. There, ~~there~~—do not answer me, but go without delay to the honourable Mrs. Carleton and Miss Belmore—say to

them, that I request that they will on no account think of leaving the castle—tell them the physician gives a favourable report of Miss Lambart.”

“ Indeed, my lady, I am grieved to say you mistake, for she is——”

“ Raving,” resumed the countess; “ I know it, Blandy, she is in a high fever; but never mind telling a white lie, if it will keep them here. Tell Mrs. Carleton the earl is better this morning, and that I hope a very few days will effect a happy change; beg her to entreat colonel Lisimore in my name, and that of lord Conway, not to leave us; and be sure, Blandy, season my request for their stay with assurances of my great regard and respect. I will speak to the Droghedas myself; the countess has been used to dress wounds, and attend the sick—she will be a very serviceable auxiliary in Miss Lambart’s chamber.”

“ And the honourable Mrs. Chatterton and Miss Obrien, what shall I say to them?”

“ Nothing,” replied the countess; “ let them, and sir Harry Ogle, use their own

pleasure. I would rather wish them to go than stay; for I suspect Mrs. Chatterton of concealing from me what she ought to have revealed; but a person sprung from the dregs of the people can have no proper notions: and as to Miss Obrien, the girl is my aversion. I shall be glad to see them depart; and it shall be my fault if I give the aunt or niece another invitation, or renew the intimacy in any way: as to sir Harry Ogle, he is an insignificant coxcomb, whose presence or absence is equally a matter of indifference."

When lord Conway retired to bed, his mind was in a state of agitation that forbade repose; for conscience presented Ada dying, and reproached him with being the cause of consigning her, young, lovely, and innocent, to an untimely grave. It was long before nature, combining with fatigue, banished reflection, and consigned him to sleep; both his mind and body were weary, and when his eyelids closed, he continued, in dreamless repose, till the next morning, when, after a long conference with Lemain, he dispatched him from the castle, on a private expedition.

The billet found at the Nightingale's Bower by sir Harry Ogle, confirmed Miss Obrien's belief that lord Conway had actually kept a mistress while at Milan; though he had positively denied the affair, she was certain the writing was his; and having frequently heard of fearful and desperate acts committed by the females of Italy, under the maddening influence of jealousy, she had no doubt that Miss Lambart had been stabbed by the very identical Ianthé to whom the billet was addressed; and it appeared, from lord Conway's unwary exclamation, of—" *What a horrible mistake!*" that he knew Miss Lambart had been taken for some other person—perhaps for herself. Miss Obrien felt alarm, and turned pale at the thought; yet, if it was so, she had reason to rejoice at having escaped wounds that seemed likely to be fatal in their consequences, and, at any rate, would occasion much suffering before they would be healed.

The mind of Miss Obrien was at this crisis any thing but tranquil; for she had embarked on the ocean of ambition, and had to contend with incertitude, duplicity

and fickleness. Nor did the interview she procured with lord Conway at all tend to remove her suspicions, or compose the irritation of her nerves ; for though he persisted in denying the billet, and disclaiming all knowledge of Ianthé, though he ridiculed her alarm, she could not divest herself of the frightful idea, that she was in reality the object of the Italian's jealousy, for whom death, by the stroke of the dagger, had been intended.

Nor was Miss Obrien at all satisfied with the degree of concern evinced by lord Conway for Miss Lambart ; there was far too much passion, too much tenderness in his grief ; he lamented her sufferings, and dwelt on her danger, in the wild desponding tone of a lover, rather than with the moderate reasonable sorrow of a relation, who was certain that her demise would considerably increase his possessions. Mutual accusations and mutual reproaches took place ; and when the parties separated, it was with menaces, and expressions of contempt and dislike.

Lemain faithfully delivered the countess of Vandeleur's message to lord Con-

way ; but he was in no humour to listen to philippics, or answer interrogations ; he therefore took breakfast in his own apartment, and afterwards strolled into the park, to avoid meeting his mother, and to arrange his distracted thoughts, which the occurrences that had recently taken place had rendered a chaos dark and troubled.

For three days Miss Lambart was considered in imminent danger ; but on the fourth, the fever abated, her ravings ceased, the wounds in her shoulder assumed a better aspect, and great hopes were entertained that she would recover. -

When the overjoyed Janet conveyed this cheering intelligence to lord Conway, he gave her his purse, which contained several pieces of gold ; but of these Janet did not think half so often, as she did of the hearty kiss and loving squeeze he gave her, of which great honour she frequently boasted, to vex monsieur Lemain ; who, after a week's absence, returned to the castle, and brought with him a considerable sum of money, with part of which lord Conway supplied the requisition of

Miss O'Brien, in the hope, that having now the means which she had declared indispensable, she would persuade the honourable Mrs. Chatterton to commence her intended journey to Limerick, without farther delay ; but having secured the cash, Miss O'Brien declared she had no wish to hurry or inconvenience her aunt, who had fixed on the following Thursday for taking leave of Doneraile Castle. Nor was unwillingness to derange the plans of Mrs. Chatterton the only cause assigned by Miss O'Brien, for feeling reluctant to begin a long journey ; but, after much acrimonious debate and argument, Miss O'Brien gave a promise, that she would proceed to Limerick with her aunt on the day appointed.

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton had married early in life ; not for love, for she had not a single particle of sentiment or romance in her composition—but for interest, to raise herself in life, and secure the good things of this world. Her husband, for whom she did not care a straw, was indulgent to all her wishes ; and after a few years, kindly died, and left her a

wealthy widow, encumbered only with the care of his orphan niece, Miss O'Brien, whose fortune of fifteen thousand pounds, left to her by his will, was to receive the addition of another fifteen thousand at the death of his widow.

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton had kept a watchful eye over the conduct of Miss O'Brien, and being well acquainted with her most secret transactions, was well assured she would not remain much longer under her protection; and though the young lady's temper was far from amiable, and she did at times make herself extremely disagreeable, yet Mrs. Chatterton thought, that, with all her faults, she should miss her society, and experience an uncomfortable loneliness when she was gone. Yet this was not an irremediable misfortune, for she was yet but in the prime of life; she was not absolutely ugly, not entirely without ambition, and she thought no reasonable objection could be raised against her altering her condition; her late husband had conferred the distinction of honourable upon her, and she

now wished to be addressed as the honourable lady something.

Sir Harry Ogle was a person of high family, not very rich, to be sure, and some years younger than herself; but these were trifling objections, easy to be got over; she had wealth sufficient for both, and as to the difference of ages, that was a mere matter of taste; and most men of sense preferred maturity. The honourable Mrs. Chatterton thought sir Harry Ogle a lively entertaining creature, and if he was serious in his professions of love for her, she did not see how she could better provide against the loneliness she had cogent reasons to expect, than by taking a second husband. Sir Harry Ogle had availed himself of lord Conway's advice, and so successfully transferred his attentions to the widow, that she had given him permission to visit her at Limerick, during her stay in that place. This arrangement she took care to conceal from Miss O'Brien, who, expecting to inherit the whole of her fortune, would, she knew, oppose, by every possible means, her contracting a second marriage.

Sir Harry Ogle's mind was not so entirely made up as Mrs. Chatterton's; it was true, he liked her wealth, which, in his opinion, was her only charm; but he was desirous of obtaining a young handsome wife; and while he protested, " 'pon his honour and veracity she would take away his heart with her," he surveyed with insurmountable and increasing dislike her yellow teeth and ill-formed nails, and mentally vowed not to travel a single mile towards Limerick, if a young rich beauty fell in his way, and it was probable he might obtain her hand.

The very great solicitude and sorrow lord Conway had evinced for the sufferings of Miss Lambart, renewed the belief of the countess Vandeleur, that she was in reality the object of his affections, whatever might be his entanglement with Miss O'Brien, who continued to act the invalid, and remained in a loose morning dress and enveloped in shawls; but from lord Conway the countess could obtain no explanation, though she availed herself of every opportunity that occurred to assail him with questions, remonstrances, and me-

naces; neither would he acknowledge himself the writer of the billet that had been found, but persisted in saying, the woman who had stabbed Miss Lambart, if woman it was, must have been some wretched maniac, who had acted under the incitement of a distempered brain. Neither when Miss Lambart was able to quit her bed, could lady Vandeleur persuade her to be more communicative; all she could learn from Ada was, that a tall wild-looking woman, who called herself Ianthé, a peasant from the Milanese, evidently insane, had forcibly detained and wounded her with a dagger. While giving this brief account, the lips of Ada quivered, and she appeared so agitated, and glanced round the room with such looks of terror, that the countess thought it prudent to let the subject rest, till her nerves were in a state to bear the questions her curiosity burned to ask; for mademoiselle Millefleur, the echo of Miss Obrien's sentiments and opinions, had asserted, "that her mistress knew lord Conway's writing, and was convinced that the billet found in the park was written by him, and no other

person; and that the Italian woman who had attempted to murder Miss Lambart, was one of his cast-off mistresses, for she knew enough of his intrigues while he was abroad, and Miss O'Brien was certain it was not Miss Lambart, but herself, she designed to kill."

Mrs. Blandy was not long before she conveyed those assertions to the countess of Vandeleur, who, when comparing it with the strange avowals and expressions that had fallen from Ada in her delirium, saw great probability in Miss O'Brien's opinion: it was true, Mrs. Chatterton had positively denied ever having heard of lord Conway forming a *liaison* while on the continent—"But that might be cunning on her part," said the countess; "for by pleading ignorance of his affairs, she avoided making him her enemy, which would have rendered her stay at Doneraile Castle unpleasant. But she could not have been blind to Miss O'Brien's flirtations with lord Conway, nor to their unaccountable conduct to each other. They do not seem to love each other, though she tenaciously exacts his attentions, and he ap-

pears impatient and displeased at his bondage. How lord Conway, who never, from infancy, bent to the will either of parents or tutors, has suffered himself to be so completely subjugated, is a mystery I cannot solve. I have no doubt but Lemain, and that pert French maid of Miss Obrién, are deep in their secrets; but as I cannot condescend to tamper with servants, I must wait, with what patience I can, till time, the discloser of secrets, explains the enigma. Next week the honourable Mrs. Chatterton and her niece take their departure, never to receive an invitation from me again; and when once their backs are turned, I hope to persuade lord Conway to give up an intimacy, that appears to afford him to the full as little pleasure as it does me."

Early on the morning that lord Conway set off suddenly, and without attendants, from the castle, he had received a letter, written in very bad French, importing that father Donnelly, a Catholic priest he had for some months been anxiously seeking, had been compelled to fly from Paris, on an accusation of conspiracy, and that

he had come to Ireland to take refuge with his relations; that he had suffered shipwreck, and was then lying sick and destitute in a hut, near the public-house at the edge of the heath, on the road to Doneraile Castle, to which he had not approached on account of his miserable appearance, having fled, at a moment's notice, from France, without being able to secure a change of linen.

“So much the better,” thought lord Conway, as his eye glanced over the signature; “your poverty is in my favour.” Mounting his horse, he said—“Now for trying the conscience of father Donnelly; if he will depart at once for America, or the East Indies, I will amply supply his necessities; and I must be greatly mistaken in the man, if he will not be glad to exchange piety for prosperity. If I can get rid of him, and obtain possession of that cursed paper, so artfully procured, I shall be at liberty to seek happiness, on a different road to that I have hitherto travelled.”

Laying plans to enforce the compliance

of father Donnelly, should he object and prove obstinate, lord Conway reached the public-house, where he was appointed to seek a direction to the hut where the priest remained. Having, with some difficulty, made his way through heaps of accumulated filth, to the door, where he called till his patience was worn out, without receiving any reply, he dismounted, and passing in to the smoky hovel (for it was nothing better), he found the host snoring before a turf fire, with a capacious empty mug before him, and a short black pipe, which had fallen out of his mouth, on the ground beside him. Terence Murphy had taken such capacious morning draughts, that it was no easy task to wake him from the deep sleep into which he had fallen, or, when his leaden eyes were open, to make him understand what was said to him.—“Wisha now, Judy,” said Terence, supposing it was his wife that shook him, “be asy, I bid you; sure now, the liquor is safe enough. Och, botheration! let me alone to chate the exciseman, a snaking, meddling shark as he is: asy, asy, Judy; folly your own bismís; go and give the

pigs a feed, jewel, and be after letting me drame a bit, about taking in a patch of the heath to plant praties on." Being at length convinced of the presence of a stranger, Terence started up, and recalled his half-drowned recollection sufficiently to say— "That no genteel had been there at all since the exciseman, who thought to saze upon the still; but, faith now, he got no drops of comfort here, the spalpeen. Sure and I chated him rarely," continued Terence, laughing, and displaying a set of broad white teeth, "for all he poked his long nose into every hole and corner, and bragged he could smell usquebaugh and whiskey at five miles distance. Plase your honour, is it the one or the other you would take a taste of?"

Lord Conway declined taking either, and again inquired if there was not a sick gentleman lodging at some house in the neighbourhood?

"House! No," said Terence; "this is the only house hereabouts, and it is myself that is the only genteel lodging under the roof, only Judy, and the two pigs,

and the lame gander, and the goose, and her brood of goslings; but, bad manners to my memory! here is a bit of a letter"—Terence took a dirty note from a hole above his head—"and perhaps it is for you. Asy, asy; sure and my father was a schoolmaster, and I myself, Terence Murphy, am not so bad at—Och, sure then, and the ninety-nine plagues all of a row fly away wid it, for this is writing; now, I make nothing at all of rading print; but writing, bad luck to the same, it always bothers me. Let me see—Lord——"

"The letter is for me," said lord Conway, snatching it from the unsteady hand of Terence—"I am lord Conway."

"It is yourself that says it," replied Terence; "but how will I be sure?"

"Will this convince you?" said lord Conway, giving him a piece of money.

"Faith and I must be very hard of belief if it would not," returned Terence, grinning. "Musha, the letter is for you, and it is myself that gives it to you, with many thanks, and you are heartily welcome."

Lord Conway read the note with much

vexation, for it informed him that father Donnelly had removed to a cabin at more than five miles distance, near the sea-shore, that he might the more speedily take advantage of any vessel that would forward him to his friends. On inquiring of Terence, lord Conway found the road to the present habitation of father Donnelly lay across a bog, dangerous to be travelled by a stranger.—“And where am I to procure a guide?” asked lord Conway.

“Well then, you must sit down, and take a drop of whiskey, and a pipe, and be asy,” said Terence, “till Judy comes in, and then I am the boy to guide you safe across the bog.”

“You guide me! and the road you say is dangerous. Why you are not sober!”

“Drunk is it you are thinking that I am? Oeh, and if I had a tub of whiskey in my head, not a drop of it would hinder my feet from seeing their way across Mac-cormock bog; only wait till Judy comes in, and if you will give me the fellow to this, gist to keep company wid it,” twirling the piece of money lord Conway had given him between his finger and thumb, “it is

myself that knows every inch of the bog, and will engage to take my father's son, maning myself, and your honour, clane over."

It was of the utmost importance to lord Conway to see and converse with father Donnelly, and as he knew not where to seek a guide, there was no alternative but to rely on Terence Murphy: he therefore sat down on a bench near the door, to wait the arrival of Judy, and in the hope of seeing some one, who, by acquaintance with the dangerous parts of the bog, might enable him to decline the proposal of Terence, and to set out immediately. But in vain his impatient eye traversed the heath in every direction; no person came in sight; and in a few moments, Terence, who had pillowed his head on a bundle of dry turf, snored loudly. More than three hours passed away, and the nasal music of Terence continued uninterrupted, while lord Conway during this tedious time, which was trebled by his anxious desire to be gone, had only the consoling reflection, that Terence would sleep off the effects of the liquor he had swallowed, and wake up

with his head clear, and capable of guiding him across the bog.

At length, when tired out, and on the point of returning to the castle, a woman suddenly appeared on the path leading to the house. A few moments before, no living thing was in sight, and had not lord Conway's thoughts been fully occupied, he might have wondered whether she had dropped from the clouds, or sprung up from the earth; but having hastily crossed the threshold, she threw off her blue cloak, and began thumping with two red fists on the back and shoulders of the snoring Terence.

"Bad manners to you now, is this the way you keep house when I am out, getting gist as drunk as a baste, and letting the genteels tend upon themselves? ~~Wie~~—shame upon you, mister Terence Murphy; is this the way of your bringing up? Sure, though I never could tell a letter in a book, I have better behaviour. Wake up, you snoring hog, or I will play Meg's diversion on your bulk."

"Asy, Judy—asy, honey now; how should I be drunk? look at the bottle, and

faith you will find it gist as full as you left it."

And so it was, for knowing his wife's violent temper, Terence seldom ventured to diminish the liquor she measured out, but contrived to keep a supply concealed from her, upon which he got comfortably drunk, whenever her absence gave him the opportunity. Sleep had sobered Terence, and Judy, pacified and civil, assured lord Conway that he could have no better nor surer guide than Terence, who knew Macormock bog before he was born, for his father and mother had lived on the hill gist above it, and had cut turf upon it for many a long year.

Lord Conway, satisfied that Terence was sober, and knew the bog sufficiently to avoid the dangerous parts, called for his horse: but here a fresh disappointment awaited him; there was no possibility of taking a horse over, for there were steep banks to climb, and chasms to leap, and Terence would not undertake to guide a horse, who perhaps would not be after following good advice, but would take his own way, and sink up to his neck, where

nobody could help him; besides, five miles was gist nothing at all at all to young genteels as had the use of their legs.

Finding that he must proceed on foot, or give up the idea of seeing Donnelly that night, lord Conway chose the former; and leaving Judy a token of his bounty, he followed Terence, who went on merrily singing:—

“ When I went before father O’Flarty,
Sure myself was the lad that was hearty,
And I told all the sins I had done;
How I kissed on the green Katty Moody,
And fought with her cousin Pat Hoody,
And broke his thick head gist for fun.”

The bog seemed to lord Conway interminable; the five miles appeared lengthened at least to a dozen, as he every now and then felt himself sinking ankle deep, then was obliged to scramble along zigzag paths on steep banks, and to leap over deep pits, into which had he fallen, he would have sunk into a bed of mud, from which no human power could have raised him. For a time, the songs and drollery of Terence beguiled the way; but unused to travel over such rough roads, and indeed little

accustomed to pedestrian exercise, his lordship's feet began to blister, and his limbs to grow stiff and weary.

"I can go no farther," said he, throwing himself on a bank that overlooked a pit similar to one he had recently leaped; "I will not be smothered in the bog, which must be the case if I go on; I could as soon leap over the moon as across that cursed pit."

"Cursed pit! well and it is gist that same, sure enough," returned Terence, "for Teddy Shanahan, his grey galloway, and seventeen gallons of usquebaugh, lie safe and quiet at the bottom; faith, and it's myself that would like a small drop of it now to give you; it would put a new heart into your body, and a pair of fresh legs under you."

"I shall never be able to cross that pit," repeated lord Conway.

"Musha no, to be sure you never will," said Terence; "nobody never thought of axing you, bad luck to the ugly devouring hole! our way lies up here, to the left; now if you would but gist try to folly me as far as that white direction-post."

“ I see nothing white,” replied lord Conway, casting a weary glance over the ster-
il expanse before him.”

“ Well then, it was white once; but standing there in heat and cold, winter and summer, rain and sun, sure it has lost its delicate complexion, glist like my Judy, who was once as fair as a lily, and as red as a rose, and she has turned of a rusty colour, betwixt grey and brown.”

“ But what of the post? where does it lead?”

“ Oh ay, the post!” continued Terence; “ why sure then, the post it leads no where, for it stands stock still; it is always in the same place, come when you will; but it stands on the edge of the bog, and not above a quarter of a mile from the cabin you are going to.”

At this cheering news, lord Conway bade Terence proceed; and though aching in every joint, the thought of a few minutes bringing him face to face with father Donnelly, gave impulse to his steps. In a hollow, between two little hills, stood the cabin he sought; its appearance was wretched; but in his present state of fa-

tigue he was glad of any shelter, however rude and miserable. Without waiting for permission, Terence pushed open the door, and entered, followed by lord Conway.

"What do you want—who are you?" asked a tall, gaunt, shrivelled old woman, in a strong Irish accent, as she rose from beside a pale slim girl, who sat bending over a heap of glowing turf.

As the old woman advanced, Terence, with a look of terror, retreated behind lord Conway, who asked for the sick gentleman who lodged with her?

"Is it fun you are making?" said the wretched-looking beldam; "look round you, and say what gentleman would lodge with Mora Dermid? That heap of turf serves my poor idiot girl and myself for a bed;" pointing with a long skinny finger to a corner of the hovel, where some rags of various colours were spread out, with a rudely-carved wooden crucifix suspended over them.

"And has not an elderly gentleman, a priest, been here?" demanded lord Conway.

"A priest!" repeated Mora Dermid;

“no, I wish he had; but no one has been here but a foreign woman, who gave me this piece of silver,” taking a small coin from a broken cup, “for laying a note at Terence Murphy’s public. It is outlandish money, and good for nothing to me sure; but when I get sight of Denis Ryan, he will give me a thirteener for it; he has a power of silver and gold pieces.”

The coin that lay on the shrivelled palm of Mora had a perforation in the middle, which was surrounded with small figures of beasts and trees. A momentary glance served to identify it in the memory of lord Conway, from whose lips an exclamation of rage and disappointment burst, as he snatched it from the hand of the astonished crone. The coin was Egyptian, and hung on the bosom of Ianthe, when he first met her in her native valley, who, at that period of simplicity and innocence, set a great value upon it, considering it an amulet that would preserve her from danger and misfortune. It was now evident to lord Conway, that Ianthe had contrived to escape from the convent to which he had consigned her, as he had

hoped, for life; and that he was decoyed from home for some purpose of diabolical revenge, of which he knew, from experience, she was capable. He now, with almost breathless terror, remembered he had no weapon of defence with him; and he had little to expect from the courage of Terence, who had crouched, like a beaten spaniel, under the blows of his wife.

Gasping with the apprehension of being murdered, his frame, wearied with crossing the bog, and his throat parched with thirst, he sunk upon a board, that, supported by stones, served, as it was wanted, either for table or seat, and feebly asked for a draught of water. The old woman brought him some in a pitcher; but having tasted it, he set it down, unable to drink, the water was so strongly impregnated with the smoke that poured in volumes from the fresh turf the girl had thrown upon the fire.

From the moment Terence Murphy entered the cabin, he had not uttered a single sentence, but had kept rolling his eyes from the squalid face of the old woman, to the dimly-defined figure of her

idiot daughter, who, enveloped in a cloud of smoke, sat on her heels, rocking herself slowly backwards and forwards over the fire. A slight rustling above his head caused Terence to look upwards, when beholding a black hen at roost on a short pole that protruded from the thatch, he exclaimed—"Saint Pathrick and the ten thousand saints presave us from the duoul and all his imps!" then rapidly crossing himself, he turned to lord Conway, who sat surveying the cabin and its inhabitants, and considering, that if acquainted with the murderous intention for which he had been allured thither, a feeble old woman and an idiot could lend but little assistance to his assassins—"Well then," said Terence, in a voice hoarse with fear, "myself never saw the likes of that."

"Of what?" asked lord Conway; "what do you mean?"

"Mane! is it what I mane you are after axing! sure then do you see that?"

"I see a hen at roost."

"And is not that enough to see? come away out of this, before some bad happens to us; come away, your honour."

The side of the hut against which lord Conway leaned his head felt damp, and as he passed his hand along the uneven surface, he struck it against an iron bar, which he instantly grasped; having now luckily secured the means of defence, he was in no haste to humour the whim of Terence, who reiterated—"Come away, before some bad happens!"

Lord Conway's feet were sore; he was weary, and in want of refreshment, for it was now night; but his desire to secure the person of Ianthe made him regardless of pain and hunger, and the thirst that parched his throat, and with much persuasion he prevailed on Terence to sit down on the board beside him.

The head of the idiot sunk on the knees of her mother; and the old woman at length said,—“What are you wanting? Have not I told you we are nothing here but two lone women? for what do you keep us from our sleep?”

“Ay, for what then?” resumed Terence. “Come away, sir, at her bidding. Sure and it will not be good for us to make Mora angry.”

“ I wish to remain here till morning, and I am willing,” said lord Conway, “ to compensate you, Mora, for the shelter of your roof. Here is money for you ; retire to your bed ; we will not disturb your sleep.”

‘ My necessity bids me take your money,” replied Mora, “ for the sake of my afflicted child, but——”

“ Och, sure ! then we understand,” interrupted Terence, “ it is not convenient and agreeable that we should remain ; ay, I know your meaning, and bad manners to me if I would like to intrude upon any body. Folly me, sir—I tell you it will be better for you.”

Lord Conway was raising the pitcher to his lips, to wet them with the smoky water, when Terence struck the vessel from his hand.

“ How now, sir ? what means this insolence ?” asked lord Conway. “ You forget yourself.”

“ No, no, I do not forget,” replied Terence, “ that you had better starve, than swallow mate or drink under this roof.”

“ Silence, blockhead, and let me endeavour to sleep.”

“ Sleep! Och, murder! murder!” exclaimed Terence; “ is it myself that would be after letting a genteel like you sleep wid your head laning against a wet wall, and under the roof of Mora Dermid? Folly me, sir, I bid you.”

“ I tell you,” returned lord Conway, angry at this obstinate perseverance, “ I will not cross that dangerous bog again, till I have daylight before me; and if you leave me here, it will be without the reward I promised you.”

“ Well then, see this—if you would give me double the reward you promised, faith it is not Terence Murphy that would be staying here till daylight, to recave it from your hand. Good rest to you!” Advancing to the door, he stopped, and looking anxiously at lord Conway, said—“ Faith it is sorrow to the heart of me to lave you in such quare company, for perhaps the old—that is Judy, my old woman I mane, will be making herself uneasy, and fancy I am gone to take a small

taste of Teddy Shanahan's usquebaugh, 'at the bottom of the bog."

"To avoid that danger, you had better remain where you are till morning," returned lord Conway, who was certain he should need a guide, even in broad daylight; "should any accident happen to you, what would become of Judy?"

"Well then, Judy is strong and able to fight her way alone in the world. But sure now and is not there full and plenty of male and praties? and is not there live stock and whiskey? Judy would have plenty of offers faith, being left a rich widow, with two fat pigs, a lame gander, and two geese, besides a share in——But will I go by myself?"

The old woman had fallen asleep, and by the light she had stuck against the wall above her head, looked ghastly: the idiot girl had raised her head from her mother's knees, and was pointing to the opposite wall, and gibbering in a low voice, as if in terror.

"Ochone, come away then; the girl sees him—I am sure she does," said Terence, covering his eyes with his hand.

“ See whom ?” asked lord Conway.

“ Och, murder then ! ten mille murders ! Do not ax me, but come away, before you see him with your own eyes.”

Lord Conway began to feel uncomfortable ; the place was lonely, and the undisguised terrors of his guide began to infect him.

“ For the sake of St. Pathrick, and St. Dennis, and St. Bridget, and all the saints together,” said Terence, “ come away, sir !” and as he spoke, he seized on lord Conway, and dragged him from the cabin, scarcely allowing him time to throw a piece of money into the lap of the still-sleeping Mora.

“ What is the meaning, Terence, of this strange behaviour ?” asked lord Conway, as he stood in the moonlight, outside of the cabin ; but instead of replying, Terence crossed himself repeatedly, and began muttering some words, which lord Conway did not understand, and which Terence afterwards said were powerful to counteract witchcraft and overcome the snares of the evil one.”

And what reason have you to appre-

hend witchcraft?" demanded lord Conway; "you surely do not believe the miserable old creature we have just left is a——"

"Hush, hush!" said Terence, hurrying across the hill to their left; "be asy then, till we cross the brook yonders, and then I will be after telling you; but folly me now, sir, as fast as you can."

Though sore-footed, and but little recovered from his fatigue by the short rest he had obtained, lord Conway smiled at the superstition of his guide, and followed his steps till they reached a narrow stream, that ran smoothly along, glittering in the moonbeams. In a moment, lord Conway was on his knees, eager to drink, and allay, with the clear cool water, his burning thirst. But Terence so earnestly entreated him to cross the narrow stream before he drank, that he stepped over, and then allayed his intolerable thirst, with a draught that, to his parched lips and throat, seemed delicious.

"Whisha! we are now clane out of her hearing," said Terence, devoutly crossing

himself, and sprinkling some of the water over lord Conway and himself.

“Out of whose hearing?” asked lord Conway, seating himself on a bank beside the water.

“Well then, out of Mora Dermid’s: sure and nobody had the good manners to tell me that she had moved from her old quarters, and lived at the bog cabin, or you would never have had Terence Murphy for a guide; but soon as I clapped my eyes upon her daughter Aileen, I was gist tumbling down in a quandary, for sure and sure, sir, that poor girl was counted, a year or two back, a great beauty; faith, and it was herself, pretty Aileen, that was courted by young men, that fell out and broke one another’s heads for her.”

“Poor thing!” returned lord Conway, “her beauty is all gone.”

“Sorrow for her then it is nothing but the truth you are spaking,” resumed Terence; “Aileen might have done well for herself, but she took a fancy for Dermot Linster, as pretty a young man as you would wish to see, and altogether as poor, worse luck for her and him, for he had

only but a boat, a fishing-net, and a pair of willing hands, to provide a living wid; and faith then, Mora Dermid turned up her ugly nose at him, and would not give her consent, bekays she wanted Aileen to marry Luke Ghalaggher, who was only but gist forty years older than herself, and had bags running over wid gold; and sorrow to the hard heart of him, nobody but himself, and the duoul his master, knew how he came by so much riches."

"But what became of Dermot Linster?"

"Became of him! sure then he was drowned, and—I was not spakin' of him; I was gist going to say, that Mora Dermid had always a quare name among her neighbours: one said she made her cow go dry, and another that she choked her pig, and another that she broke her mare's leg."

"And do you believe all this nonsense, Terence."

"Nonsense is it?" replied Terence, shaking his head; "and bekays why should not I believe the truth? well then, when the old witch could not bring Aileen to give up Dermot, she grew more spiteful against him than ever; and what did

she do, but upset his boat one day, when he was out fishing, and he was drowned, while the sun was shining and there was not a breath of wind stirring the water."

"But this accident," observed lord Conway, "might have happened without Mora having any thing to do with it."

"Not at all," resumed Terence; "it was well known she hated him, and every body said it was the old witch, Mora Dermid, that drowned poor Dermot Linster; and sure was they after dragging her before the priest; and did not father Monagan excommunicate her, bekays she would not pray for the pace of Dermot's soul, or pay for a single mass to be said to help him out of purgatory?"

"These are strong proofs against her certainly," said lord Conway, smiling at the superstitious credulity of Terence, who continued—"Musha, it is proof enough of her dealings with the evil one, save and presarve us," crossing his forehead and breast, "that imp that lives with her, in the shape of a black hen—is it laughing you are? well then, it is myself that wishes no ill luck may folly your mirth."

“ But how, Terence, came Ailleen so altered ? ” asked lord Conway.

“ Sure and was not it love for Dermot that did it ? and did not she pine and pine till her red cheeks and lips turned white, and her flesh wasted away, and left nothing at all but skin to cover her bones ?—and all the while, did not the old witch her mother torment her to marry Luke Ghalagher, till the girl took sick, and said, that Dermot’s spirit was with her every night, and told her that he had not got his death fairly ; but that one she knew was after follying him, and upset his boat, as he was throwing out his net ? and the poor girl lost her wits, and it was my own that was gist leaving me, when I saw her pint to the wall ; for sure and sure Dermot’s spirit was there, and she was telling him she was gist ready to go wid him. Sure and I am glad that I got you out of her hut while her eyes were shut, for I know enough of Mora Dermid’s tricks ; faith it would have been a sarious sort of a joke, if she had bewitched us, and turned us both into nigits.”

“ It would indeed, Terence.”

“ Sure and it was that made me in such haste to get away from her cabin, and not to spake about her, till we got to this side of the brook, for witches can neither see nor hear across a running stream.”

“ Having escaped the dangers of witchcraft,” said lord Conway; “ how are we to avoid what I consider the worse danger of crossing the bog? for it will never do to sit here, when I am certain I have an enemy on the watch for me, and without any weapon of defence, except the bar of iron I brought from Mora’s cabin. I stuck it in the bank beside me,” continued his lordship, looking round, and missing it; “ where has it vanished? what, was the iron bewitched?”

“ Sure then it belonged to Mora Dermid,” replied Terence, “ and it was like to have had her power upon it; and if it had, faith then nothing good would happen to you, for sure and sure it would have bewitched you; and so to chate the old witch and her master, I gist gave it a kick into the running strame; but if you can walk as far down as the hut yonder——”

“I see no hut,” interrupted lord Conway, displeased that the idle superstition of Terence had deprived him of the only means of repelling the attack he momentarily expected.

“Well then, only folly me, and you shall be after seeing Lucius Magrah’s nate convenient cabin; and the rosy-checked colleen Bessy, his niece.”

“But how is this to take us over the bog?”

“The bog is it you are axing about?” continued Terence; “never trouble your head about the bog—bad manners to the ugly way of it! Lucius Magrah keeps a boat, and he, the soul, if you will only shew him the good-looking face of a thirteener, will row you down the Liffey, and land you gist over against the Vandeleur Arms, in the village, where——”

The certainty of escaping the terrific bog inspired lord Conway with fresh spirits; he forgot his blistered feet, and starting up, bade Terence proceed; which he did, at a pace which his wearied companion found it difficult to keep up with;

but just at daybreak, it brought them to the fisherman's cabin, where they found the rosy-checked Bessy up, and preparing breakfast, which consisted of milk, potatoes, and dried fish. It was now, for the first time in his life, that lord Conway experienced the truth of the homely aphorism—" *Hunger is the best sauce*," for he ate heartily, and with a relish that he seldom enjoyed at the luxuriant *dejeuners à la fourchette* to which he was accustomed.

"Well then, Terence Murphy, and when was you spaking with Shamus Bretts and Pat O'Shane?"

"'Asy, asy, machree!" replied Terence; "I seldom see them, excepting a chance time or so."

"Why sure then, who goes up the mountain to bring down the——"

"Shut your paratie trap, Bessy, will you now?" interrupted Terence, winking, and casting sidelong looks at lord Conway; "wait till the Sabbath, my bouchil, and Shamus Brett and Pat O'Shane will be down, and then you can ax them which of the two manes to go wid you before the soggarth."

“Sure then it is not the one nor the other of them,” replied Bessy, with a scornful toss of her head, “that would have honey enough in his tongue to persuade me to go wid him before the priest; and it’s myself, good luck to me this blessed morning, as bids you remember I told you so.”

The boat being ready, lord Conway pressed the rosy fingers of Bessy, and left between them a remuneration for the fare of which himself and Terence had partaken, that made her believe he must be the viceroy himself, or some other great personage; and till he was out of sight, she never ceased wishing him long life and great luck.

As the boat passed a cluster of rocks, lord Conway’s eye caught the figure of a woman, stationed on the top of a cliff, known by the name of the Smugglers’ Cave; she seemed to be watching some object which was not discernible to him; and as the boat doubled the cliff on which she stood, he was certain it was lanthe.

Why she should have led him to a remote spot, so far from assistance, and suf-

ferred him to escape, without an attempt to injure him in any way, appeared inexplicable ; perhaps her plot for that night had failed, and he was reserved till her scheme was better organized, and more certain of success ; but he had now received warning, and was returning home with a resolve to dispatch Lemain and others, on whom he could depend, to seize upon her person, and place her under such care as would for ever prevent her annoying him by her presence, and defeat any future attempts upon his life.

Having left the boat, and dismissed Terence, lord Conway made the best of his way to the castle, where he had no sooner entered, than he learned the horrible occurrence of the night. Revenge and jealousy, it was evident, had instigated the conduct of Ianthe ; and it was also plain, that she had somewhere met father Donnelly, who had acquainted her with passages in his history, which had led to the sanguinary outrage committed on the person of Miss Lambart.

That the letters he had received were written by Ianthe, to decoy him from the

castle, while this murderous deed was committed, was now clear ; and it seemed improbable that he, the cause of this revolting act, should be suffered to escape, if she continued at liberty : the law of self-preservation authorized lord Conway to secure the person of Ianthe ; but not choosing to submit to a legal investigation of the affair, he deputed monsieur Lemain to see her safely placed, where her malignant passions would have no object to exercise their fury upon, except the rage of disappointed vengeance should excite her to terminate with her own hand her hateful existence.

CHAP. IV.

—————"When love
In mutual bond unites two hearts, they
Through life's changes shall be happy."

"I have no faith in omens, I believe not
Warnings are sent to say that death is near,
Or that the spirit wanders from the living
Man, only to tell its own departure
To another world."

.....

"When this pair were joined in marriage, the
Aspect of the heavens was dark and stormy;
The stars did form angry conjunctions;
Saturn and Mars did frown upon each other,
Which truly doth denote discord and hate,
Turning the honey of love into gall."

.....

————Said you—"A gorgeous funeral?"
Well, let them bury him with pomp and state;
The worms will pay the carcase of a lord
No more respect than if he were a beggar.

Z.

WHILE the honourable 'colonel Lismore
debated in his mind the important ques-
tion—"To marry, or not to marry?" or
whether he should at once propose for lady
Indiana Corry, or wait till she had been

tried by the fiery ordeal of a winter at Dublin, he was brought to a determination by a letter from his friend sir Philip Egerton, who had the week before resigned his liberty to the lively sensible lady Stella Savage.

Sir Philip humorously described the difficulties he had encountered and overcome in his road to the temple of Hymen, through the violent opposition of the baroness Ormsby, who had most unwillingly given up the power to tyrannize over, and torment her niece, and from two formidable rivals, one of higher rank, and the other much richer, than himself; "but in spite of rage and vituperation on the part of the baroness, and flattery on that of my rivals, my Stella never wavered in her attachment to me; she was not dazzled by the coronet of an earl, or bribed by the money-bags of a miser; I carried off the prize," wrote sir Philip; "and if present appearances may be trusted, I have a fair prospect of domestic happiness."

Sir Philip's letter decided the question; the colonel no longer hesitated. At Dub-

lin, lady Indiana Corry, the sole heiress to incalculable Indian wealth, would be surrounded with admirers; parental influence might persuade her to bestow her hand where her heart felt no preference; married to a profligate, or to a cold-hearted, careless husband, her youth and inexperience might be seduced into errors, that would terminate in wretchedness.—“ I love the little peri,” thought colonel Lismore, “ with a more tender devotion than I at one time believed any of her sex could inspire; and if I mistake not, the artless creature returns my passion. Having obtained the sanction of her parents, it will become my pleasant duty to guard her from evil—to be at once her husband, lover, and friend.”

Miss Lambart's recovery was no longer considered doubtful; the physicians had pronounced her convalescent; and she was permitted to receive the congratulations of her friends in her dressing-room.

Returning from a visit to the fair invalid, colonel Lismore encountered lady Indiana Corry, and most fortunately, as he thought, alone.—“ Your countenance is

the smiling harbinger of good news," said the colonel; "Miss Lambart's health, I perceive, continues to improve."

"Yes, colonel, she has rested well, and has made her friends happy, by assuring them she is much better this morning; but I cannot stop a moment—adieu!" kissing her little white hand; "mamma waits for me to walk with her, and I must be gone." She would then have bounded along the corridor, but the colonel had made a prisoner of her hand, and it is probable its captivity was not very irksome or unpleasant, for she continued to walk with him up and down the corridor, frequently blushing and smiling, and not at all resenting the freedom of his arm in circling her waist.

What was said during this interview, is much easier to guess than narrate, for the colonel's handsome countenance was lit up with a glow of pleasure; while that of lady Indiana expressed modest confusion, as releasing the hand he had continued to hold, he covered it with kisses, and suffered her to depart to her appointment with her mother.

That very hour the honourable colonel Lismore requested a private audience of the earl of Drogheda; and it was the same evening understood by all the guests at the castle, that the gallant colonel was the accepted lover of lady Indiana Corry.

“So that little uninformed romp has conquered the conqueror!” said Miss O'Brien, spitefully; “and in all human probability, will be duchess of Hazelgrove: defend me! what unaccountable creatures men are! I should as soon have expected him to solicit the hand of old fubsby, the baroness Ormsby. After rejecting so many fine women, one would suppose the man had taken leave of his senses, to choose such an under-sized chit; why, the poor thing is almost a dwarf! well, certainly she will be a most graceless grace!”

“Rather below the standard of beauty; not so tall as the Venus de Medicis,” replied sir Harry Ogle: “but admitting that a wife is an evil, the colonel has shewn his wisdom in choosing a little one.”

“That is but second-hand wit, and ought to descend to your valet with your discarded clothes. Really, sir Harry,” con-

tinued Miss O'Brien, affecting to yawn, "you grow excessively dull; you are positively infected with the *mauvaise atmosphère du château de Doneraile*."

"Very true, Charlotte; the castle is become quite dismal and humdrum—a hospital for sick and wounded," observed Mrs. Chatterton, "and the countess grows more haughty and disagreeable than ever. Yesterday she put on her high airs, and treated me in such a way, that I felt quite ennui when we retired to the drawing-room after dinner. Thank God! this is Tuesday, and on Thursday morning, please fate, I will begin my journey to Limerick, where I hope to meet joyous faces, and persons that value my friendship, and to join in pleasant parties, where I may regain my lost spirits."

"And, greatest of all your expected pleasures, receive the complimentary welcome of your ruby-faced admirer, sir Hector Desmond."

"Fie, Charlotte, how can you talk such nonsense?" said Mrs. Chatterton, trying to blush; "sir Hector is my neighbour, but not my admirer; and if the man was so

silly as to entertain a regard for me, it would only end in his disappointment."

"Why he is a rich baronet," returned Miss Obrien, "and not many years older than yourself—what objection——"

"Objection!" interrupted the widow, "there are many objections, Miss Obrien; and first, and not the least, sir Hector's grown-up daughters; the very idea of being a stepmother, gives me the horrors."

"It must be prodigiously annoying and disagreeable," observed sir Harry, "to be called mama by two tall girls, who fancy, perhaps, they ought to have had husbands, instead of their father taking a wife."

"Exactly so, sir Harry," resumed Mrs. Chatterton; "the young ladies, I dare say, would not refuse an eligible offer. Suppose you try your luck, that is, if you were not serious in speaking of a wife as an evil."

"On the contrary, I think a good wife the greatest of human blessings; and the life of a bachelor, of all others, the most comfortless and miserable."

"But I think you expressed a dislike to little women; you approve a tall——"

“ There again you misunderstood me,” interrupted sir Harry ; “ I really consider myself particularly unfortunate in having so badly expressed my meaning ; I am a general admirer of the ladies, be they short or tall ; but upon my honour, as a gentleman, if I have a preference, it is in favour of——”

“ Those who have most money,” said Miss Obrien, laughing ; “ nay, nay, you need not take the trouble to contradict my opinion ; you are like the rest of your mercenary sex—you care nothing for the person, old or young, handsome or ugly, giantess or pigmy, provided her fortune be worthy your devotion.”

This was a truism that sir Harry Ogle did not relish ; and perceiving the green eyes of Mrs. Chatterton fixed upon him, he protested he would never suffer wealth to influence him in the choice of a wife. “ All the world knows I am not rich,” continued sir Harry ; “ but they are yet to learn that when I marry, it will not be for gold—a congenial mind, amiable qualities, delicacy of sentiment——”

“ Ha, ha, ha, ha ! I shall die with laugh-

ing," screamed Miss O'Brien; "pray, sir Harry, say no more, unless you wish to murder me; be merciful, I entreat you."

Sir Harry bowed, and glad to dismiss the subject, he observed that lord Conway, who was then crossing the lawn, looked very unwell; "but no doubt," continued he, "the earl of Vandeleur's distressing state of health, together with the mysterious affair of Miss Lambart, must greatly disturb his mind, and affect his spirits."

"I thought you had known lord Conway better," replied Miss O'Brien, with a sneering smile; "I believe very few of his acquaintance would do him the injustice to suspect that he could be guilty of the weakness of feeling for the sufferings of any one, however nearly related to him. Be assured, sir Harry, his lordship will submit with most Christian resignation to the death of his father, happen when it may; and as to the mysterious affair of Miss Lambart, lord Conway could, I shrewdly suspect, give, if he pleased, an explanation of that, extraordinary as it appears."

"Bless me, Charlotte, are you aware of

what you are saying?" asked Mrs. Chatterton.

"Perfectly, madam," replied Miss O'Brien, with a look so nonchalant, that Mrs. Chatterton resumed.—"Why surely you would not insinuate that lord Conway knew of, and abetted the attempt upon the life of his cousin? For my own part, I think him to the full as disagreeable as his mother, and I dislike him quite as much; but for all that, I have not such a shocking opinion of him as to believe he would contrive, or connive at, murder."

"I did not mean to insinuate any thing of the kind," replied Miss O'Brien; "no, no, lord Conway is too much infatuated by the beauty and wealth of Miss Lambart to desire her death, though I am not so certain he would object to remove an impediment in the way of his wishes."

"I never was good at explaining riddles and enigmas," said Mrs. Chatterton, "and what you say is full as puzzling: if lord Conway is, as you suppose, in love with Miss Lambart, I am sure I can see no impediment in his way, for I know, from

unquestionable authority, that both the earl and countess of Vandeleur wish nothing so much as to bring about a marriage between them."

"What a pity that such disinterested wishes should be fated to disappointment!" returned Miss O'Brien.

"Disappointment!" repeated Mrs. Chatterton; "I see no reason to apprehend disappointment; if the parties are, as I suppose, agreed, what should prevent their union? But if the parties are not agreed, the coveted estates of Miss Lambart will evade the rapacious grasp of those who are eager to add house to house, and field to field: it is evident Miss Lambart has no great partiality for her most noble cousin, Alfred lord Conway; and unless she smiles approval, his haughty politic mother will never bring her long-projected favourite scheme to bear; she will never unite the Lambart with the Vandeleur estates, though she considers it '*a consummation devoutly to be wished*.'"

Sir Harry Ogle gave it as his opinion, that lord Conway was not in love with Miss Lambart, because he had encouraged

the pretensions of another ; “ in fact,” said sir Harry, “ his lordship persuaded me to make the lady an offer.”

“ Which he was very certain would not be accepted,” replied Miss O'Brien ; “ poor sir Harry, could not you see, what was so very obvious, that lord Conway was diverting himself at your expence ?”

“ No, I had no such suspicion ; it would turn out no joke, if I thought I had been made a jest of by lord Conway.”

“ If you did, you would doubtless call him to account.”

Sir Harry Ogle had too much regard for his person, to hazard it in a duel.— “ It would be violating the laws of hospitality,” said he, “ to challenge lord Conway under his own roof, and while I am his guest ; but if I could be certain he actually designed to make a jest of me, I would not forget, at a future and more fitting opportunity, to demand an explanation, and——”

“ An apology, certainly, sir Harry,” urged Miss O'Brien ; “ your honour would oblige you to insist that he should apologize, or——”

“For shame, Charlotte,” interrupted Mrs. Chatterton, who was fearful that she would provoke sir Harry Ogle to embroil himself with lord Conway; “you are not aware of the consequence of what you are saying, perhaps urging on a duel; for my part, I tremble at the idea.”

And so did sir Harry Ogle; but Miss Obrien laughed, and said—“There is not the smallest cause for alarm; I, as Beatrice says in the play, will promise to eat all sir Harry Ogle kills.”

Mrs. Chatterton was too well acquainted with the satirical propensity of her niece, to suffer her ill-nature to lessen her opinion of sir Harry Ogle’s capability to resent an affront; but the widow had heard it said, that “*every bullet has its commission*,” and if he fought a duel, how did she know but he might fall? it was the wisest way to shun the hazard, and in her most conciliating manner, she said—“She hoped sir Harry would have more sense, than to think of resenting what lord Conway might have advised out of friendship; and if he actually had a sinister design, which it was impossible to as-

certain, it was the wisest part to treat it with contempt. Only think, sir Harry," added Mrs. Chatterton, "what a terrible affliction it would prove to your mother, and indeed to all your friends, if any unfortunate result, the loss of limb, or death, were to take place."

Sir Harry Ogle's blood ran cold at the bare apprehension; he thought Mrs. Chatterton the most sensible, if not the handsomest woman of his acquaintance, and he assured her he would abide by her advice—"You have convinced me, my dear madam," said he, "that my mother, and, I flatter myself, certain others would suffer much distress, should any thing fatal happen to me, and for their sakes——"

"Pray be most particularly careful of your person," resumed Miss O'Brien; "for a limping one-armed, or one-eyed Adonis, though an interested, would not be a very interesting lover. Do, sir Harry, have the goodness to draw up that blind, and open the window, for I protest I am overcome with your *mille graces*, or with the heat."

Sir Harry did as he was requested.

The air is quite reviving," said Miss Obrien; but on looking out on the lawn, she saw lady Indiana Corry and colonel Lismore, sitting on the root of a tree, in earnest conversation.—“How very sentimental and romantic, breathing fond vows under the shade of trees!” exclaimed Miss Obrien; “there is no sight in nature so sickening to me as a pair of lovers—it is infinitely more oppressive than the heat.” As she spoke, she left the room, and afforded Mrs. Chatterton an opportunity to entreat sir Harry Ogle to avoid, what he had no intention to seek, a quarrel with lord Conway, and to obtain from him a promise that he would not remain above one day at Doneraile Castle after her departure.

Monsieur Lemain, obedient to his instruction, took with him the persons appointed for his companions, in the expedition lord Conway had engaged him, by bribe and promise, to perform; these were men whom his lordship remembered from his childhood to be unprincipled, and at all times ready to be hired, at a trifling remuneration, to commit any act short of

murder. By these men **Lemain** was conducted through many scenes of sylvan beauty, where, stretched beneath the arching boughs of gigantic trees, the deer gazed round them with a look of security, that seemed to say, in this tranquil spot we are safe from the arrow of the hunter. Quitting these verdant solitudes, they traversed the intricate paths of a seldom-trodden wood, where the thickly-tangled branches excluded the light of the sun; and Lemain felt the cold chill of apprehension stealing on him, as one of the men pointed out an open space of peculiarly savage appearance. Several large trees lay uprooted on the ground, scorched and blackened, as if by the scathful power of lightning, that seemed to have changed the natural verdant hue of the grass, which, in many places, had forsaken the ground, and left large patches entirely bare.

“Sure then, it is not yourself that will be after going through Doran’s Glen, Murdoch?”

“And for why should not I, Lary? it is all one to me entirely, to go through

that same, as to go by the hill, and any way, it is the shortest cut sure."

"Well then, if you please, I had rather not set foot upon that ground," replied Lary; "though I have not the same reason, I should think, to dislike it that you have, for sure it was no kin of mine that kilt his wife under the trees there, that lie where the lightning threw them that same night, and not so much as a blade of grass has ever grown since, to cover the spots where the poor crater's blood was spilt."

The dark heavy brow of Murdoch was knit in a tremendous frown, as clenching his brawny hand, he menaced Lary with a blow.—"But sure then, what credit will I get," said he, "by knocking down a fool that has no brains in his thick skull?"

"And what for then would you be after knocking me down?—have not we always been friends, Murdoch?"

"To the duoul wid such frinds! for what then do you throw Morty Shee in my teeth?—bad manners to you, did not he make a clane breast to father Regan? and was not the poor fellow hanged for

killing his wife, gist all through being jealous of Rory the pedlar?—and was not he after giving life for life, sorrow to the hearts of them that brought him to that end!—and sure then, what more will you want, you spalpeen?”

“Gist to make frinds wid you,” said Lary, holding out his hand; “that’s all then entirely; and bad luck to me, Murdoch, if I ever spake to you about Morty Shee again!”

Murdoch shook the offered hand of Lary; and Lemain, who had expected to witness a battle, if not a murder, was heartily glad at this peaceable termination of their difference, though there was in the look of Murdoch an expression of cunning malice, that plainly told there was revenge lurking in his heart, and the resolve, if possible, to bring Lary to the same disgraceful end as Morty Shee.

Instead of passing through Doran’s Glen, they ascended a hill, that rose abruptly on the edge of the wood: the hill was steep, and having gained the summit, Lemain paused to take breath; and though pos-

sed of little taste for the sublime and picturesque, he could not gaze on the wide and beautiful expanse of land, of wood, and water, spread out before him, without expressing admiration. The fields wore a mantle of the freshest and richest green; the woods displayed their various shades of foliage, and the Liffey, like a broad sheet of silver, glittered in the beams of the summer sun; while in the distance rose the tall spires of houses consecrated to prayer, and the magnificent towers of Doneraile Castle.

“*En vérité*, dis is very grand,” said Lemain; “de prospect very fine, very agreeable; I have not seen noting like dis since I leave France.”

“Musha then, I do not believe, moun-sér, that your land of frogs and sallad is to be compared at all at all wid Ireland,” replied Lary.

“De frog and de sallad bote good in der vay; and Ireland very good, very pretty, but not like de grand nation; no, no, dere is no country in the world dat come near to France. Your Dublin, bah!

look at Paris; so superba de palace, de hotel, de shop—*ma foi*, Dublin !”

“ Sure and every crature knows it is the finest city in the world entirely,” said Lary, growing warm; “ and as to your Paris, faith now, and do the folks there know the taste of a maly pratie?”

“ Och, bother then to your nonsense now, be asy, Lary, wid you questions, will you? How should the French mounseers know the taste of a pratie, when they live upon vegetables sure, all the year long?”

“ Vegetables!” repeated Lary; “ is that fish or fowl then? for it is myself that never heard of that same vegetables.”

“ It is garlick and turnips, and such sort of green herbs sure,” replied Murdoch. “ But be after moving shank’s mare.”

“ I vish I had de mare, or de horse,” said Lemain; “ for de vay is very long; my legs dey grow tire; dey no like de much valk.”

“ Faith then, if you had been ating praties all your life, your legs, mounseer, would have been as strong as mine,” re-

plied Lary; "but the way to the bottom of the hill is soft and asy; only gist look after your stips, for if you should take a fall, the stones at the bottom will not be so soft to your bones as a feather bed."

With this warning, Lemain cautiously and safely descended the hill, into a valley of rocks, piled upon each other in the most fantastic shapes, and threatening to fall and crush the traveller, who desperately ventured to trust his feet upon their projecting ledges; yet among these loose rocks, that trembled beneath his lightest step, lay the dangerous path that was to conduct Lemain to the Smugglers' Cave; and frequently, overcome by terror and fatigue, he clung to the sharp projections, and protested he could go no farther, mentally cursing his guides for bringing him by a road so full of peril; but while he toiled and groaned, his companions laughed, jested at his weak complaining, and scrambled and leaped over huge tottering fragments, with the fearless agility of the mountain-bred chamois. It was only the impossibility of retracing his steps that urged the terrified Frenchman to attempt

climbing the rock that Murdoch pronounced to be asy to descend; for there was steps cut on the opposite side that led to the mouth of the cave.

It required all the courage that Lemain could muster, to enable him to descend these precipitous steps, so shallow, that they scarcely allowed a resting-place for the foot. But this danger was at last surmounted; and with more devotion than he had ever felt before, Lemain thanked the good Providence that had again permitted him to reach a place of safety, while he reposed his wearied limbs on a green bank beside the waters of the Liffey. His more hardy colleagues, to whom rest was not necessary, explored the Smugglers' Cave, but the person they sought was gone.

To Murdoch, whom lord Conway had appointed her jailer, this was a severe disappointment; for he had been promised a yearly salary, as long as he held Ianthe in safe durance. His loud execrations roused up Lemain from the sleep into which he had fallen, who, when he heard that the cave was vacant, supposed that Ianthe had only wandered forth to procure food, and

proposed that they should secrete themselves and watch for her return.

This plan met Murdoch's approbation, and he was pointing out a near and convenient place of concealment, when Lary, who had been on the look-out, put an end to the hope of her return, by telling them he saw a boat leave the side of a small vessel, after placing a woman on board, and that, with all her canvas spread, the vessel was making away from the coast.

Murdoch growled, and in his own language bestowed a million of curses on the Frenchman, for not having been able to make more speed. Lary bade him take it asy.—“Bad luck now, worse another time,” said he. “Sure then, we have nothing at all to do but be after making ready for another job; and the genteel will never be so mane as not to pay us for our trouble.”

Lemain was unwilling to return with only an account of having arrived too late; the disappointment would, he was certain, excite the violent temper of lord Conway; and what to him was of more moment than his lordship's rage, it would, he knew, con-

siderably diminish the reward he expected to receive; he therefore deliberately seated himself at the mouth of the cave, to wait the approach of the boat, which he perceived was taking a direction towards them.

“And for what then,” asked Murdoch, sullenly, “do you sate yourself? . Faith now, that stone is not a bed, no, nor an asy chair; and if you mane to rach the castle to-night, why then, mounseer, it’s myself that tells you it is time to put your best leg forward.”

“My best leg!” repeated Lemain; “sans doute, my both leg be very vell, very good; but, my friend, I no mean quite to kill myself by de valk; I no like de rock, nor de vood; I vill engage de boat to take us home; it vill be de easy vay to travel.”

Lary, who had a superstitious dread of passing near Doran’s Glen, especially in the gloom of approaching night, declared himself satisfied with mounseer’s arrangement.

Murdoch’s mind was rankling with the thought of the loss he should sustain by Ianthé’s escape, and he muttered scorn-

fully—"Faith then, such poor wake cratur as Frenchmen ought to be staying at home wid the women, to make ready the praties, and nurse the children; sure then, it makes no difference to myself, whether I go in the boat or walk, it is gist the same thing to me entirely."

Lemain hailed the boat, as it neared the cave, and having bargained with its sole occupier, a sun-burnt weather-beaten looking man, to land them at Doneraile village, where he had left his horse, himself and his villanous colleagues were presently embarked, and sailing on the smooth bosom of the Liffey.

Lemain was now at his ease, and by questioning the boatman, learned that a woman, from foreign parts, had for some days past taken up her solitary abode in the Smugglers' Cave; she was tall, had large dark eyes, and long black hair, that hung over her face and shoulders. The boatman said she did not seem to be in her proper senses, for she talked to herself, and looked very wild; but when she went to the neighbouring cabins, she never did any mischief, and paid honestly for what

she had, so nobody attempted to molest her.—“ And it was this same blessed morning she spied the vessel in the offing,” said the boatman, “ and she came to me in great haste, and hired my boat to take her alongside; and there she talked some outlandish lingo to the captain, who seemed to be an old acquaintance sure, for he handed her aboard, and paid me like a genteel as he was, and gave me an elegant tiff of raal French brandy, great luck to his ventures! and away the little vessel sailed, gist like a swallow; but where she came from, or whither she went, it is not Teddy Neil that knows; though sure,” said he, winking, and putting his finger to his nose, “ it is myself that has a small matter of a guess, bekays the captain was so civil and so ginrous; the vessel wid be only a nate bit of a smuggler entirely, that’s it; she had dropped her cargo lower down, at Carey’s Point; for old Lucius the fisher is a deep hand sure at the trade, and resaves Cogniac and claret for most of the genteels about the country, great luck and long life to him for the same!”

From the boatman's description, so accurately given, Lemain was perfectly satisfied that the tall dark-eyed foreign woman could be no other than Ianthé, who, after the horrid deed she had committed, was no doubt anxious to quit the country; and as she was actually gone, he supposed lord Conway would not be sorry to be spared further expence and trouble on her account.

Having neared the village of Doneraile, monsieur Lemain parted with his companions, and mounting his horse, pursued his way, as had been previously concerted, to Dublin, to deposit in the hands of a well-known money-lender, certain papers, as security for a sum then to be supplied.

The usurer, as is customary in such cases, made many objections, and raised innumerable difficulties, on the plea of his lordship's being a minor, and the danger, from death and other causes, of personal security. At last, after reading and re-reading, and hesitating and demurring, till Lemain believed he must depart as he came, the one half of the required sum was produced, and with much seeming reluct-

ance consigned to the hands of Lemain, whose receipt the usurer exacted, having called in his two clerks to witness the delivery of the money.

"If milor borrow de money, at dis rate," thought Lemain, "he soon be de poor man. Eh bien, he pay me, and yen he no cash left for de douccur, for de vat you call de littel bribe, den I beg leave to make my congee. Ma foi! I no live upon de fine vord, de sentiment; bah! bah! de l'argent is better ting."

Lord Conway, as Lemain had conjectured, did not regret that Ianthe had escaped the life-long imprisonment he had designed her; for though he was certain he could depend on the stern relentless character of the man he had chosen for her jailer, yet she had given him proof how fertile she was in stratagem, by having broke forth from a convent, where she was under the *surveillance* of a lynx-eyed abbess, and the guard of her watchful nuns, and he could not be certain that she would not again have effected her liberty and endangered his life; but the vindictive wo-

man was gone, and he breathed more freely with this assurance of safety.

Lord Conway was anxious to be admitted to the presence of Miss Lambart, but he was told she was still weak, and had been forbidden to converse much. Though desirous to obtain an interview, this account rendered him fearful to agitate her spirits, not only with a reminiscence of the late horrible transaction, but with recollections of his own unexplained conduct; and besides these impediments, he dreaded to provoke Miss O'Brien into refusing to depart with the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, for he had seen, with much secret pleasure, the usual bustle of packing and preparation, and he soothed his impatient wishes with the certainty that the next morning would assuredly liberate him from the restraint that had long been galling to his temper and his pride.

Mrs. Chatterton had sufficient tact to discover that she had lost ground in the favour of the countess of Vandeleur, and could no longer hope to belong to her *elite* society, and that, catching her cold manners, the lady visitors treated her with

unpleasant ceremony, particularly the countess of Drogheda, who, from being free and communicative, had drawn up into an attempt at stateliness and dignity, and entirely withdrawn herself and her daughter from every thing like intimacy. Mrs. Chatterton was confident this reserve was not occasioned by any misconduct or solecism in good breeding on her own part—she was quite certain it was to the strange conduct and appearance of Miss O'Brien she was indebted for the dereliction of her friends; but she knew the crafty and ambitious character of her niece too well, to harbour a single doubt of her being able, at any moment she saw it necessary, to clear up the mystery in which she was at present enveloped; and she consoled her present mortification, with the certain assurance, that, in a short time, the acquaintance of the countess of Vandeleur, which she arrogantly and insolently called patronage, would be of no sort of consequence; and not least among her reasons for indifference, respecting the friendship of the countess Vandeleur, was her expectation of marrying sir Harry

Ogle, when, with aid of his fashionable connections, she should be able to establish a *coterie* of which she would be the head.

Lord Conway, on this last evening of her stay at Doneraile Castle, devoted the chief of his time to Miss O'Brien; and the countess, his mother, having determined it should be the finale of their intimacy, received the parting compliments of the aunt and niece, with all the suavity and politeness she could so well assume.

"When the countess retired to undress, she more than once expressed herself glad to part with Mrs. Chatterton and her intriguing niece.—"Why, Blandy, are you dumb?" asked the countess; then observing that the waiting-gentlewoman looked uncommonly serious, she inquired if she was ill.

"No, my lady—I cannot say that I am positively ill—only a little disturbed; but——"

"But what?" demanded the countess; "if you are not ill, what is the matter with you? Look at yourself in the glass—positively your face is as long as my arm—

you know I detest dismal—speak out at once—I insist upon knowing what is the matter.”

“ Pray, my lady, pray do not be angry, and I will speak; dear, dear! it is so terrible! and—and I feel so frightened!”

“ What has frightened you?—have you seen a ghost?”

“ Oh, mercy upon us!” exclaimed Mrs. Blandy, casting a terrified glance round the room.—“ No, my lady, no; I have not seen any thing myself—pray, my lady, do you believe in fetches?”

“ No, truly; I am neither superstitious nor credulous,” replied the countess, laughing; “ speak out plainly, Blandy; have some of the servants seen my fetch?”

“ No, my lady—no, indeed—not yours.”

“ The earl’s then?—tell me at once—you see I am not at all alarmed.”

“ No, my lady; not the earl’s.”

“ Why really, as the doctors have pronounced his recovery impossible,” observed the countess, “ his fetch would come on a very silly errand, to announce what we all expect will shortly happen. Well then, Blandy, I suppose it must be Miss

Lambart's; but I am persuaded she will live to contradict her fetch; for I left her within this half hour in good spirits, and feeling so much better, that she talks of moving into the pink drawing-room to-morrow."

"Oh dear, dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Blandy, bursting into tears, "it is my lord Conway's fetch, that more than one of the servants have seen crossing the matted gallery, just after midnight."

"Indeed!" said the countess, suddenly growing serious; "and where did the fetch vanish?"

"Cauthleen, the laundry-maid, fell in a fit, my lady, when she saw it; and Richard, the under-butler, who had sat up, cleaning the plate, was so frightened, that he tumbled down the back stairs; so neither of them could tell which way the fetch went."

"I think I can guess," returned the countess; "and if you have courage, Blandy, to go with me, I will endeavour to speak to this troublesome fetch, and learn why he visits the matted gallery."

"Sure—sure, my lady, you will not be so venturesome."

“ Why, what have I to fear ? ”

“ I am sure I do not know ; only I have heard——”

“ And believed more nonsensical tales than I should have patience to listen to,” replied the countess ; “ but among the rest, Blandy, have you never heard that a spirit appears on purpose to be questioned ? Plainly and seriously, I have no belief in supernatural appearances ; but I have long suspected an improper intimacy between lord Conway and Miss O'Brien, and I am determined this very night to satisfy my doubts. To-morrow morning she leaves the castle ; no doubt they will have a parting interview. Banish your fears, Blandy ; make haste, and divest me of my ornaments ; hand me my *robe de chambre* ; throw that lace scarf over my hair ; and now,” wiping the rouge from her face, “ I think I make a much more spectral appearance than lord Conway possibly could, even with his head enveloped in the large scarlet handkerchief he binds over his *papillotes*. Come, Blandy, be quick ; light the opaque lamp, and follow me.”

Somewhat recovered, though still ap-

prchensive and nervous, the waiting-woman followed the steps of the countess to the matted gallery, which branching off to the left, led to the grand staircase, and to the corridor on which Miss Obrien's apartments opened. On the right of the gallery was a flight of stairs that led to the servants' offices, whose sleeping chambers were reached by an opposite staircase. Concealing the lamp, the countess seated herself in a recess formed under a Gothic window, which placed high in the wall, and surrounded by heavy carved framework, cast but a dim light through its narrow panes, even at noonday, and now but feebly admitted the rays of the moon; the greatest part of the gallery was in deep shadow.

Fearing to behold some ghastly shape, Mrs. Blandy pressed close to the countess, and trembled in every limb, as a light flashed along the wall. Presently a foot was heard ascending the back stairs, and to the infinite relief of the almost-fainting Blandy, Lemain stepped cautiously to the left-hand passage, where he stood for a few seconds in a listening attitude: he then

returned on tiptoe, and gave a low cough, which signal was answered by the immediate appearance of lord Conway, who, as he passed on to Miss Obrien's apartment, bade Lemain go to bed, as he should not want him before his usual hour in the morning.

This command was perfectly distinct to the attentive ear of Mrs. Blandy, though spoke in a whispering voice; and as soon as Lemain and the light had disappeared, she called the laundry-maid and the butler fools, for having mistaken the real, living, substantial person of lord Conway for his fetch.

The countess did not interrupt her vituperation, but sat undecided what course to pursue, till the sound of approaching footsteps were heard, and the smart figure of Millefleur was seen tripping along the gallery, with a key in her hand. Making a sign to Blandy to remain quiet, the countess slowly rose from her seat, and planted herself at the head of the back stairs, just as the Frenchwoman was about to descend: down went the *fille-de-chambre* in a fit, letting the key fall from her hand, which the

countess having secured, she beckoned to Blandy to follow her.

The bedchamber of Miss Obrien was beyond the dressing room; and as the countess unlocked the door, she distinguished the voice of lord Conway, who hearing the outer door open, said—"What the devil are you doing, Millefleur? why do you not go to bed? lock the door, and push the key under; there is no necessity for your sitting up; I can let myself out in the morning."

"Mind and be up early, Millefleur," said Miss 'Obrien, "for the honourable Mrs. Chatterton's angelic temper will be discomposed if she is kept waiting; but before you go, hand me a glass of lemonade."

The countess of Vandeleur, drawing the shrinking Mrs. Blandy after her, entered the sleeping apartment, where sat, prepared for repose, the astonished pair.

Mortified beyond measure at being discovered in so unequivocal a situation, lord Conway shrunk from the haughty and resentful gaze of his mother; while Miss Obrien, unabashed, demanded what pre-

tence could excuse the countess of Vandeleur's intrusion, at such an hour, in the apartment of her guest—what apology she could offer for thus meanly turning spy on her actions?

“Apology!” repeated the countess, scornfully; “to you, bold, shameless girl, no apology is due; I came hither to preserve, if possible, the honour of my family from disgrace.”

“Mother, mother,” said lord Conway, “return to your own apartment, and I will explain.”

“The explanation I have already gained is sufficient; shall I not credit the testimony of my own eyes? what more can I have yet to learn? do I not see you in the bedchamber of this vile, artful——”

“Hold, madam,” interrupted Miss O'Brien, “restrain your invectives. I have too long subjected myself to undeserved suspicion, but here it ends.”

“Charlotte,” exclaimed lord Conway, “remember your promise—you will not ——”

“Yes,” resumed Miss O'Brien, “I will proclaim to the world that I am your wife,

and, I flatter myself, no dishonour to your choice."

"Lord Conway's wife!" repeated the countess, turning her eyes on the agitated countenance of her son, whom she hoped and expected would contradict this hateful assertion; but, stamping on the floor, he only muttered between his clenched teeth words of execration.

"Alfred," said the countess, "can this be true? have you brought disgrace on our ancient and illustrious family? Do not drive me mad, Alfred; assure me you have not married this artful, this low-born girl; only set my mind at rest on this point, and I will forgive your present folly. Let her assure me she has no claim, no right to expect to share the title of Vandeleur, and I will pledge my honour to conceal her shame."

"Your ladyship is prodigiously kind, generous, and considerate," returned Miss O'Brien, "but I have had more respect for myself than to put your most amiable disposition to such severe trial. I have no shame, madam, to conceal," continued she, haughtily; "I am the lawful wife of lord

Conway—let him deny me at his peril; but he cannot—dare not.”

“Dare not!” reiterated lord Conway, fiercely; “you know not what I dare.”

Lady Conway, as it is now necessary to call her, smiled contemptuously.—“You dare not take my life; your bond I have placed beyond your reach.”

“He is a minor,” said the countess; “lord Conway has not the power to contract marriage without the consent of his parents, and those parents will ever look down with contempt on Miss Obrien ambitiously grasping at his coronet, though they would be ready to pity her weakness, and forgive her lapse from virtue.”

“This is really being too obliging, too amiable; but I will take care to acquaint the world with my marriage, and thank my stars I have the power to make good my claim: the priest who married us is now at Dublin; the good father Donnelly will —”

Lord Conway repeated —“At Dublin! it is strange he did not inform me of his arrival in Ireland.”

“He would not be bribed to deny hav-

ing joined our hands," resumed lady Conway; "and had I been guided by his counsel, I had not so long exposed myself to contemptuous whisperings, to injurious suspicion, and neglect under this roof, where I ought to have been treated with honour, and commanded respect; but from this hour I will assert my right; I will be acknowledged and received as my rank demands; I will be known as the wife of lord Conway."

The countess of Vandeleur's lips trembled with rage and mortification.—"Alfred, Alfred, is it possible," said she, "that you have been guilty of this unpardonable folly? Why do you stand as if you were turned to marble? why do you not contradict this insolent fabrication?"

Lord Conway knew the temper he had to deal with, and feared to provoke it by denial.—"I admit," said he, "that I married Miss Obrien at Paris; I confess it was a foolish act on both sides, for I believe the lady repents it equally with myself, having discovered there is little reciprocity of sentiment between us; with this conviction, I trust she will see the folly of

persisting in a claim which will only afford theme for idle animadversion and scandal, as it is certain my nonage must render our marriage null and void."

The countess of Vandeleur's countenance brightened as his lordship continued. — "I have no doubt Miss Obrien will see the wisdom of avoiding publicity in this affair, and, accepting the terms I have already offered, consent to our eternal separation."

"To the utter ruin of my own reputation, and the injury of my unborn infant," returned lady Conway; "no, really I am not so accommodating; I have four witnesses ready to prove the justice of my claim: and better still, I hold a bond, properly attested, by which lord Conway stands pledged to acknowledge our marriage the day he comes of age, or forfeit the sum of four hundred thousand pounds."

The countess shrieked, and overpowered by rage, fell into a fit; Mrs. Blandy, who had retired into the dressing-room, hastened to the assistance of her lady.

"She had better be taken to her own

apartment," said lady Conway, ringing her bell violently and repeatedly.

"Are you mad?" demanded lord Conway, holding her hand; "what need of more exposure? are you not satisfied with the mischief you have already occasioned?"

"Whatever mischief has hitherto occurred," said lady Conway, "has fallen on myself;" and perceiving Mrs. Chatterton enter the room with Millefleur, she added—"I have borne on your account disgraceful suspicion and unmerited reproach; but I have now done with concealment and mystery; all shall be revealed. Madam," addressing Mrs. Chatterton, who really was astonished at seeing the countess of Vandeleur, "lord Conway is my husband; I was married to him at Paris, by your confessor, who will be forthcoming when necessary, with the other persons ~~who~~ witnessed the ceremony. This disclosure being made, I am determined not to risk my life by taking a fatiguing journey; you will therefore *départ* to-morrow alone; I will remain here, that my child, as is most proper, may be born under the roof of its noble and illustrious ancestors."

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton affected displeasure and surprise *à merveille*; she had suspected the marriage, soon after it took place; but fearful of falling under the countess of Vandeleur's displeasure, she had cunningly affected ignorance, and now with a grave face protested she was amazed, and infinitely concerned at this clandestine union, which she knew would occasion her dear friend the countess great disappointment, who had other views.

"Yes," replied lady Conway, "I am no stranger to those views; but before they can be accomplished, I must be laid under ground."

"I would to Heaven you had," said lord Conway, "before I had the misfortune to meet you."

"I thank you for the kind wish, but I hope, my dear lord, to live many years to be——"

"My torment, my curse!" exclaimed lord Conway; "to be the destroyer of my hopes. But mark me, I will, if possible, disappoint your ambition."

"Stand off, woman—I want not your

assistance—I am not to be deceived by your pretended concern,” said the countess of Vandeleur, rudely pushing away the hand of Mrs. Chatterton, who was officiously holding her gold vinaigrette to her nose; “you have wickedly contrived and assisted to draw in the heir of Vandeleur to debase himself by a plebeian marriage; but I will never rest till it is set aside.”

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton would have entered on her vindication; but the countess, without deigning to speak, haughtily imposed silence, by waving her hand, and left the room, followed by Mrs. Blandy.

“If I had consulted my own judgment,” said Mrs. Chatterton, “I should have declined this visit to Doneraile Castle. I wish I was a hundred miles off—what I dreaded has come to pass.”

“And what I wished and hoped,” returned lady Conway; “my situation loudly and imperiously demanded this explanation; my reputation is now cleared, and my child will have no stigma cast on its birth: but I feel fatigued, and must to my

repose. You will let me see you, madam, before you depart."

"You cannot intend to remain here," said lord Conway; "you will certainly go with Mrs. Chatterton?"

"Certainly I intend no such thing," replied her ladyship; "the home of her husband is the proper abode of a wife; and I shall not be so imprudent as to quit the side of my natural protector."

"Stay—go—do as you will!" returned lord Conway, as he left the apartment; "but assure yourself, the discovery of this night will render your stay at Doneraile Castle as contrary to my wish as it will be disagreeable to the countess of Vandeleur."

Lord Conway having departed, Millefleur was questioned by what means the countess of Vandeleur had gained possession of the dressing-room key, by which she had so unexpectedly admitted herself "to the annoyance of her son," said lady Conway, "but to my great satisfaction. as it compelled me to divulge a secret, that had become very inconvenient to keep."

Millefleur said she had taken the countess for a spectre, and supposed, in her

fright, she must have dropped the key, for she never missed it till she heard the bell; and then, fearful of passing through the matted gallery, she had come up the grand staircase, and had borrowed some keys from the housekeeper, in the hope of finding one that would fit the lock.

Lady Conway laughed immoderately at the idea of the stately countess of Vandeleur enacting the Castle Spectre; then complaining of being tired and unwell, she repeated her request to see Mrs. Chatterton, before she set off in the morning, and bade her *bon repos*.

But before the morning was far advanced, there was running backwards and forwards through the corridor; and the journey of the honourable Mrs. Chatterton was put off, to her great disappointment, who was now more anxious to avoid meeting the countess Vandeleur than ever she was to court her society; and before evening it was known to every individual in the castle, that Miss Obrien had been more than a year privately married to lord Conway, and had that day become the mother of a boy, that seemed likely to live

and perpetuate the ancient and most noble race of Vandeleur.

In the heat and fury of her indignation, forgetting the precarious state of the earl's health, and how much all that would tend to irritate or discompose him had been forbidden, the countess of Vandeleur rushed into his apartment, and in a high tone of resentment, disclosed the degrading marriage of their son, and the total subversion of their long-cherished plans.

This was indeed displeasing to the aristocratic pride of the earl; but instead of joining in the rage of the countess, he said, the chief blame lay in themselves, who had subjected lord Conway to no control, but had suffered him, even from infancy, to follow the dictates of his own will.

This observation, by the goading conviction of its truth, increased the rage of the countess, who retired to repeat, to her attentive and obsequious auditor, Mrs. Blandy, the monstrous disobedience of her son, and the provoking reproaches of her husband.

Before the earl of Vandeleur had recovered the shock given his debilitated

frame, by the information of his son's plebeian marriage, intelligence was brought to him of the birth of his grandson, together with the wish of the countess, and the intention of lord Conway, to set aside his marriage.

That night the earl remained silent and absorbed in meditation; and the first question he asked his physician, the following morning, was—how long he thought he could live? Perceiving him unwilling to reply, the earl demanded, with much earnestness, a candid opinion of his situation; and received, what he believed and expected, a confirmation of the impossibility of his recovery, and the great probability that a few days would terminate his existence.

The earl submissively bowed his head, and with a look of perfect composure and resignation, ejaculated—"The will of Heaven be done!" He then said he had passed a restless night, and expressed a desire to sleep. His curtains being closed, he remained near three hours in tranquil repose; when he awoke, he desired to see

his confessor, with whom he remained in private some time.

“ I will now,” said the earl, “ conclude my worldly affairs, that, when I am summoned, I may be ready to depart, without a wish to delay my journey.”

The earl's solicitor had been some days at the castle, on business relative to his lordship's English property ; and he was now admitted to his apartment, it being necessary that the earl's signature should be placed to new leases, and other important papers, and a codicil added to his will.

The solicitor having received his lordship's instructions, which he carefully wrote down, lord Conway was summoned to his father's presence, mortified and exasperated at the premature discovery of his clandestine union, which he had been at so much trouble to keep secret, and had hoped to conceal till the earl's death, and then to get rid of, on the plea of his being a minor when it was contracted. He entered his father's apartment in a frame of mind little calculated to bear reproof, or to deprecate by a confession of error, and ac-

knowledge of disobedience, the displeasure he had incurred; but the countenance of the old nobleman seemed to express more sorrow than anger, and evidently bore the ghastly seal of death. The not-to-be-mistaken alteration that had taken place within four-and-twenty hours, gave a transient pang to the conscience of lord Conway, and, under the influence of momentary remorse, he sunk on a chair, unable to defend, or even offer an excuse for what the earl called his very worst act of folly—"An act," said he, "that has defeated plans formed for your happiness, your honour, and your interest, and disappointed hopes your mother and myself have for years encouraged of seeing you united to Miss Lambart, whose amiable qualities, beauty, and fortune, would have added dignity and lustre to your title."

"That hope may still be realized," replied lord Conway, eagerly; "for I am not yet of age, and the law will dissolve——"

"Rash, unprincipled boy!" interrupted the earl, solemnly; "think you that Heaven will absolve you from the crime of separating from a wife, against whom you

can allege no greater fault than having lost the power to please your capricious fancy? And dare you believe that I, who am on the very verge of eternity, about to appear before the awful and supreme Judge of judges, will authorize you to commit an act of such cruelty and injustice? I know not whether love or ambition induced the lady to become your wife; but of this I am certain, the Scripture expressly says—*‘It is not lawful for a man to put away his wife, except for adultery.’*

“But our tempers disagree,” said lord Conway: “I have discovered innumerable defects and imperfections; in fact, I perceive, and deeply regret, the folly I have committed, and——”

“Would plunge deeper into error,” returned the earl; “you would render your child illegitimate—Alfred, Alfred, it cannot be!”

“It can, my father—I have taken advice.”

“And so have I,” resumed the earl, “from conscience—an unerring counsellor, and it is my command that you take no measures to dissolve your marriage: I

could have wished it had never taken place ; but Heaven has seen fit to frustrate my designs, perhaps to convince me that Miss Lambart being a heretic, was no fit wife for you, who have been brought up in the true faith : fortune never appeared to me of such importance as ancestry, and in this particular you have greatly disappointed me : but doubtless," continued the earl, " all is for the best, and what I, in my blindness and ignorance, consider a misfortune, Infinite Wisdom may convert into a blessing. I forgive your disobedience, Alfred, and have ordered my domestics to respect and pay attention to every wish of lady Conway's. Our friends are apprized of your marriage ; and this gentleman," turning to his man of business, who was busily writing—" this gentleman has my instruction to prepare a settlement, not according to the trifling fortune of Miss O'Brien, but to the rank and possessions of the future earl of Vandeleur."

" I object to this as totally unnecessary," said lord Conway, his meteor eyes flashing indignation—" there will be no occasion for a settlement : I am resolved to set aside

my marriage; I have already adopted measures that promise success; I am prepared with——”

“Are you prepared,” asked the earl, “to relinquish the English estate of Bengworth Hall, and with it the funded property, the account of which was placed before you yesterday by this gentleman? for be assured, Alfred, these will be lost to you for ever, if you, on any pretence, save that of undeniable infidelity, separate from your wife, till death dissolves your union.”

Lord Conway was speechless with rage, while the solicitor, at the earl's command, read aloud the codicil he had just added to his will, which in the event of lord Conway refusing to have the ceremony of marriage between himself and Charlotte O'Brien publicly renewed, as soon as she was able to leave her chamber, gave Bengworth Hall, with all the lands thereunto belonging, with four hundred and eighty-six thousand pounds, vested in the British funds, to the said Charlotte O'Brien, as compensation for the loss and injury by the breach of marriage contract sustained

by her the said Charlotte Obrien, the produce of the said estate of Bengworth Hall, together with the yearly interest arising from the said four hundred and eighty-six thousand pounds, to remain in the possession of the said Charlotte Obrien, for the support and maintenance of herself, and the maintenance and education of her first-born son, the issue of her marriage with Alfred lord Conway; and at her decease, the whole of the English estate, known by the name of Bengworth Hall, and the aforesaid sum of four hundred and eighty-six thousand pounds, to devolve on the above-named Charlotte Obrien's first-born son, the issue of her marriage with Alfred lord Conway, and on his heirs for ever, with the——"

"I have heard enough!" said lord Conway, starting from his seat; "but though this division of the estates, and alienation of so large a sum of money, will deprive the earldom of Vandeleur of part of its wonted splendour, it shall not constrain me to live with a woman I detest."

"Alfred, as you value my blessing—as you hope for the world's respect——" But at that

moment lord Conway valued neither, and he rushed from the presence of his father, with a heart full of rancour and resentment, and more than ever in love with Miss Lambart; so true it is, that our desires are increased and stimulated, by the obstacles that arise in the way of their attainment.

The earl of Vandeleur lamented the obstinacy of his son; but it had not the effect of altering his sentiments or intentions; and the codicil being added, and his will witnessed by his confessor and two physicians, was that night signed and sealed.

Introduced by Mrs. Chatterton, the countess of Drogheda, and the honourable Mrs. Carleton, visited lady Conway in her chamber, to offer their compliments and congratulations, and to admire the babe, which, strong and healthy, seemed determined to remain in the world, in opposition to the wishes of the countess of Vandeleur and of its own father.

At the suggestion of the countess of Drogheda, Millefleur, who had been from the first entrusted with the secret of the marriage, was dispatched with the infant to

the apartment of lord Conway, who at first refused to bestow a look upon it, and angrily demanded why he was pestered with a brat he never would acknowledge?

“Ma foi, den de charmant babe vill acknowledge you, milor.”

‘Millefleur knew that his lordship was extremely vain of his person, and she cunningly contrived to turn this weakness to the advantage of the child.—“De infant very much image of you; de same dark beautiful eyes, de very same coral lip, like de bow of de Cupidon, and de same dimple in de—vat you call dat—in de sin.”

“Its birth is the punishment of my sin,” replied lord Conway: “but take the brat away—I have no wish to trace the resemblance between him and his mother.”

“My lady have de blue eye and de light hair,” replied Millefleur; “dis child no like de moder, it have de large bright dark eye, and de dark curl upon de tete.”

Lord Conway had a curiosity to trace the resemblance so persisted in by Millefleur; and as his looks were directed towards it, the child, roused from sleep, opened its really beautiful eyes, and

stretched out its little dimpled hands towards him.

Few persons are entirely callous to the feelings of nature; there is something in the helplessness of infancy, that affects and appeals to the heart, that forcibly pleads for affection and protection: the heart of lord Conway was hard—it seldom was sensible of humane or tender emotions; but the look and action of the infant touched a chord that vibrated with tenderness unknown before, and he gazed on the child, whose tiny fingers had clasped one of his, with pride and pleasure; he no longer cared for its mother, but he felt the babe was dear to his affection, and it would give him pain to resign it; this was the triumph of nature, but it was not pure and unmixed, for at the same moment he recollected, if he gave the boy up, it must be at the loss of nearly half his fortune. He thought too of Ada, whose approval the present state of things rendered hopeless; but time might do much in his favour; death, or some other equally efficacious circumstance, might restore him to liberty. These, and other thoughts

not at present necessary to relate, passed rapidly through his brain, and made him resolve to obey the command of his father, rather than give up the child, and sacrifice so large a portion of his fortune. Having determined on his future proceedings, he bade Millefleur remove the mantle, that he might see the bantling.

Millefleur drew nearer to his lordship, who said, placing five pieces of gold in her hand—"It is really a fine healthy-looking child."

"And de image of you, milor."

"Of that I cannot pretend to judge. Perhaps he may resemble me as he grows up."

"Sans doute he vill have de lip, and de eye, and de nez, and de veedling tongue dat vin de cœur of de ladi."

Lord Conway smiled, and inquired after the health of lady Conway?

Miladi is vell, dey say, as a personne in her situation can be. But vat I tell my ladi ven she ask vat milor Conway say? vill I tell miladi you come see her toute a l'heure?"

"Yes, Millefleur, you may give my

compliments to her ladyship; and say I will do myself the honour to call in her apartment before——”

“Bah, bah!” interrupted Millefleur; “complimens and honeur—de t'end of de fiddlestick! I remember de time ven you put de louis d'or in my hand, and say; procure me de interview vid dat belle ange, mademoiselle Obrien—tell me vere she go take de valk—vere she ride, ma foi! All de mens dey adore and burn vid love for de littel minute, and den dere love go out all at once, and dey grow cold as de ice.”

“Ay, Millefleur, you say true; expectation and possession are of very different temperaments. But get you gone, and say I will come to her ladyship presently.”

Lord Conway was certain his mother would never be reconciled to his marriage; but her resentment was, in his opinion, of little moment—it would not deprive him of the title of Vandeleur, or the estates annexed to it, therefore her displeasure sat easily on his mind, and appeared of no consequence; but the remembrance that he had contracted debts to a large amount, which would be demanded as soon as he

came of age, made the earl's funded property of the utmost consequence; it was on that he relied to pay his creditors. To live with his wife, though he detested her, appeared the wisest plan; for opposition to the command of his father would involve him in awkward embarrassments, and nearly reduce him to beggary; for the present it was expedient to wear the semblance of obedience and acquiescence, however much revolt and abhorrence swayed his heart: with this prudent resolve, lord Conway visited the chamber of his lady, whose ambitious views being crowned with unexpected success, she was perfectly satisfied to accept politeness for affection. She had received kind inquiries after her health from the earl, who had requested to see his grandson, and the haughty countess of Vandeleur's blessing and forgiveness could be dispensed with; she had been acknowledged the wife of lord Conway, in the quarter essential to her interest, and the countess might continue resentful and unforgiving as long as she thought proper.

Miss Lambart, who was every day re-

covering health and bloom, while she pitied the distress and disappointment expressed by the countess of Vandeleur at the conduct of the earl, whom she persisted could not be in his proper senses, or he never would have opposed his son's wish and intention to set aside the low marriage into which he had been inveigled by Charlotte O'Brien, and her artful scheming aunt, could not help rejoicing that the earl's will, so vehemently condemned by his mother, would set her free from the persecution of lord Conway's addresses, whose mystery was fully explained by the disclosure of his marriage, and whose hope of obtaining her hand must now be utterly extinguished, by the earl's peremptory command that he should not separate from his wife.

Miss Lambart was now convinced she had been mistook by the forsaken Ianthe for Miss O'Brien, and that her information respecting lord Conway's marriage was perfectly correct.

Ada's shoulder was now healed; and though she had suffered much from terror and pain, her amiable and feeling mind

was pleased to reflect, that the wounds she received had only occasioned her temporary suffering and confinement, while, if inflicted on lady Conway, they might have caused, not only her death, but that of her infant.—“ Heaven is wise and merciful,” said Ada; “ let me be truly thankful that I am not maimed or disfigured, and that my mind is restored to peace; and though it appears but too probable that ambition was the chief incentive, on the part of lady Conway, yet I trust and pray that her conduct, as a wife and mother, may remove all prejudices, and reconcile her to the countess of Vandeleur.”

Nor did the happiness she felt at being released from any future solicitations and avowals of lord Conway render Ada forgetful of her interesting little friend, lady Indiana Corry, who had made her the confidant of her engagement with the honourable colonel Lismore, for whose connubial felicity she offered up her sincere and earnest prayers, at that throne from whence all gracious blessings and good gifts are dispensed.

The countess of Drogheda, and the ho

nourable Mrs. Carleton, had fallen under the displeasure of the countess of Vandeleur, for having paid their congratulatory compliments to lady Conway; and so severe had been her sarcasms, on what she termed their adoration of the rising sun, that they felt offended at her pride, and at the unfeminine resentment that would have been gratified, to deprive a young creature, in lady Conway's situation, of the support and countenance of persons of her own sex; and more than all, they felt shocked at her openly expressed detestation of the unoffending babe, whom she many times wished dead.

The honourable Mrs. Carleton was not possessed of superior talent, but she had a good heart, and a most amiable temper, qualities far more useful and estimable in society; for while the world admires genius, it is awed by its brilliancy, and is deterred from familiar approach, while those who have no striking talents invite confidence, and **endear** themselves to all within their sphere of action, by their charity, their kindness, and humanity.

The countess of Drogheda, having en-

tertained suspicions injurious to the character of Miss Obrien, considered it nothing more than common justice to make the reparation that lay in her power, by now shewing attention to lady Conway; and when Mrs. Carleton and Miss Belmore talked of an immediate departure from the castle, she pointed out the still weak state of Miss Lambart, who, in the countess of Vandeleur's present irritation of mind, must be more lonely and neglected than lady Conway, who had the comfort of her aunt's presence and support; and, out of regard to Miss Lambart, she begged them not to leave, till she was able to quit her apartment.—“ Besides,” said lady Drogheda, “ it is no small disappointment for a mother, after having, for nobody can tell how many long years, thought of nothing else, even in her dreams, but marrying her son to the sweet pretty creature that got murdered about him, all but the trifling bit of life that was left in her by chance! Faith now, to lose Miss Lambart, and her big estates, that lie so convenient to the Vandeleur property, it is enough to provoke a saint sure. Then I

feel for the countess, poor creature! for sure and sure there is no more comparison between Miss Lambart and lady Conway, than there is between a pigeon and a crow."

"I am sincerely sorry for Miss Lambart, whom I respect and admire," replied Mrs. Carleton; "but really the behaviour of the countess Vandeleur has been rude in the extreme. I make every allowance for irritation and disappointment; but if she had not suffered her wishes to blind her, she must have seen, that, had not this prior marriage presented an insurmountable obstacle, she never would have prevailed on Miss Lambart to bestow herself on lord Conway, who, though high-born, rich, and handsome, has, I am certain, failed to render himself agreeable to her."

"It is just the truth you are saying; Miss Lambart, sure, never seemed to shew the least bit of liking for her cousin—but then she is very young, and might have been persuaded to forget to dislike him, if he had been at liberty to try if he could make himself agreeable; but marriage and hanging, they say, go by destiny; and I

hope that lord Conway, since he cannot have Miss Lambart, will make an elegant husband to the wife he has taken."

The entrance of the subject of her speech silenced lady Drogheda, who was about to express some doubts respecting the future happiness of the wedded pair. Lord Conway came to invite the ladies to the apartment of his father, who had insisted on his grandson being named in his presence that evening. To this the countess Drogheda and Mrs. Carleton assented, and promised to attend at the appointed hour: but to the arguments and entreaties of her son, and the remonstrances of her husband, the countess of Vandeleur remained inflexible.—"Though I cannot annul this hated union," said she, "I will never appear to sanction it—I will never, if possible, see the artful creature who calls herself your wife, or her equivocating manœuvring aunt; and as to the child, the offspring of the detestable Charlotte Obrien, it never shall be any thing to me. Ask me not to be present, Alfred; let the earl, whom illness has rendered imbecile in mind, as well as body, give it what name he chooses; but I will persist

in saying, no power on earth can give the brat a just claim to the title and dignity of Vandeleur."

"And this, madam, is your affection for me?" said lord Conway, his look changing from entreaty to sternness—"this is your boasted love——"

"Ungrateful—disobedient boy! I have loved you too much—my affection has been too plainly evinced, and on this you have presumed: have you not, from your earliest years, tried my patience and maternal tenderness?—have you not committed extravagances, contracted debts, defied all government and authority?—have you not repeatedly incurred the anger of your father, and have not I," continued the countess, almost breathless with rage, "have not I stood between you and his displeasure?—have I not concealed and extenuated your faults?—have I not, time after time, secretly paid your debts?"

"Yes, yes, I allow all this, and even more than you have named; but pretend not, madam, to say that you were actuated by the pure spirit of maternal love—give

it," said lord Conway, " its true designation—say you were influenced by pride, and while you accuse me of ingratitude, remember also, when you indulged and supported my follies, it was to gratify yourself, who fostered in me the passion for expence: in childhood you allowed me to waste money—to incur debts; you concealed my errors—and why? because you would not have the world believe a son of yours could have faults, in common with his fellow-men; your own arrogance has been my example—your own ungoverned temper taught me to despise and spurn control, unrestricted in my conduct—unlimited in my expenditure; be content, nay, pleased, that worse has not occurred, than my having rashly contracted an imprudent marriage."

" Begone, unnatural wretch!" exclaimed the countess, furiously—" quit my presence—your insulting language will not speedily escape my recollection.—I marvel though, so apt a scholar should so far forget the lessons of pride impressed upon him, even from childhood, as to degrade his dignity by marrying the daughter of a

plebeian: it shall not be my fault, if Doneraile Castle is not left for lord and lady Conway to receive the congratulations of those who are mean enough to court their favour, at the expence of mine: hence from my sight—I care not if we never meet again.”

Lord Conway left the presence of his mother, as little satisfied with the will that constrained him to respect her present ties, as she was; for the person of his wife had long ceased to charm, and the defects of her temper, her cunning, and ambition, had become so glaringly obvious, that he bitterly repented his own rashness, and the obstinacy that had impelled him to the resolve of defeating the wishes of his parents. He had been flattered by the scornful Miss Obrien's attention to him, when she appeared to shun and despise other young men of rank—he had fancied himself violently in love with her, but a very few weeks brought him to reflection—the beauty that had fascinated was become familiar—he saw he had committed a great folly, but he believed it was not irremediable; and when they parted at Paris, it

was with a determination, on his part, to set aside the marriage contracted in his nonage; but it was necessary to keep this intention secret, till he could possess himself of the bond he had so imprudently given, before Miss O'Brien, who knew how little dependance was to be placed upon his principles, would consent to the joining of their hands. But if grown weary of his wife, and desirous of breaking the ties that bound them together before he left France, how bitterly did he curse his rash opposition to the plan of his parents, when he beheld the lovely, high-born, wealthy Miss Lambart, that cousin, whom, when a child, he had disliked, and delighted to tease, and treated with persevering rudeness, because his parents told him to love her, for she was to be his wife! When he went abroad, they did not fail to warn him against forming a serious engagement; for it was their wish he should always look upon himself as the affianced husband of Miss Lambart. The letters of his mother were full of the beauty and accomplishments of Ada, and the honour and advantage of her alliance. By Miss O'Brien he was told, that Miss

Lambart's person was not considered more than tolerable; that her accomplishments were not by any means first-rate; and that she was dull, shy, and methodistical. Lord Conway was not disposed to yield obedience to parental command, particularly in what he called the tyranny of imposing a wife upon him; and Miss O'Brien's account of the lady confirmed him in disobedience. But when, after receiving advice at Dublin, relative to invalidating his marriage, he reflected on the enormous sum that would be the penalty of breach of contract, he was ready to consider the case hopeless. His lawyer suggested the possibility of wheedling and flattering his wife out of the bond, or gaining possession of it by some stratagem. It was this important document brought lord Conway incog. to the castle, to enjoy, as he told his lady, a few happy hours with her, before his public arrival imposed restraint upon them. He had some time before been weary of his wife; but when he beheld Ada, beautiful, graceful, and admired, he execrated his own rash obstinacy, and more than ever detested the art of her who had so

misrepresented an angel, and worked on his impetuous passions, till he had put on the fetters her cunning had prepared for him. The lovely, innocent Ada, so different to the being he expected to see, inspired lord Conway with a passion more sincere and ardent than he had ever felt for any of her sex. Besides, he was debarred from publicly expressing his devotion, and this increased his regret and his love, while vanity stimulated the hope, that when he had got clear of his present hateful enthrallment, he should, with the entire approbation of his parents, obtain her hand; for not all her denials, nor yet the obvious pains she took to avoid him, brought conviction to his understanding, that she could be sincere in refusing him her admiration and regard—him who, in Italy and France, had been considered a demi-god—for whom so many females had sighed—and by whom so many had been deluded and forsaken.

But Ada, though her image was worshipped in his heart, with a passion fierce and unconquerable, must for the present be given up; lord Conway had no alternative

but to live with his wife, or renounce the wealth necessary to support the state, which he considered it was better not to live at all, than not be able to support. But while lord Conway saw himself compelled to submit to uncontrollable dictation, and disagreeable arrangements, he did not consider himself obliged to relinquish the cherished hope of some time calling Ada his. In the mean time, he saw the policy of submitting with a good grace to his most unpleasant bondage, and to act the polite husband to her he wished in her grave. His child was really an object that interested him, unfeeling as he was towards its mother; and to treat the babe with affection cost him no effort.—“By appearances,” said lord Conway, “the whole world is cajoled, and by appearances shall the artless Ada be deceived into a belief of my reformation. I will play the hypocrite so well, that she shall pity, forgive, and love me; and then—— But let the embryo means rest in my brain, till time, the grand maturer, bring them to perfection.”

At the appointed hour the company assembled in the little drawing-room, next to the earl of Vandeleur's apartments, and looking much better than he had for some time, the old nobleman was wheeled into the room, to witness the ceremony of naming his grandson. At his desire, the infant boy was named Ulick Reginald, after himself.—“ It is an honourable name,” said the earl, “ and has for many generations descended from father to son, unsullied by disgrace.” After the ceremony, the earl took the child in his arms, and kissing its forehead, fervently and solemnly blessed it; then turning to his son, he said—“ Alfred, attend to my advice; in all probability it will be the last I shall ever offer you; bring up this child to respect and obey you; love him wisely; let not unbounded indulgence render him self-willed; let not unmerited and perpetual praise make him vain and opiniated; let him suffer privation and denial, that he may learn to feel for the wants of others; teach him to be humane and charitable; but above all, with his earliest reason, instruct him in religious duties; bring him up in the holy

Catholic faith, that when he departs this life, I may meet him in that glorious eternity to which I am hastening."

The earl appeared faint; Mrs. Chatterton took the child from his arms; lord Conway poured out a glass of wine, but before he could apply it to the lips of the earl, his breath was gone—the animating spirit had fled for ever. Shocked at this sudden departure from life, the guests hurried from the apartment, leaving the priest and lord Conway to perform the necessary offices for the dead.

The sad intelligence of her lord's decease soon reached the ears of the countess of Vandeleur, who, though aware that the earl could never recover, did not expect this sudden extinction of life.—"It is all over now," exclaimed the half-frantic countess; "and the evil I am least able to bear falls heavily upon me. Had he lived, I might have prevailed; but the dead are not to be persuaded. The earl cannot now revoke his will; my sun is set to rise no more. Charlotte O'Brien, a girl sprung from the *canaille*, is now countess of Van-

deleur ; and I, disappointed in all my hopes, live to see her triumph."

A succession of hysteric fits obliged the countess to take to her bed, where she lay, ill in body and mind, while preparations were making for conveying, with all the pomp and solemnity due to his rank, the mortal remains of the earl of Vandeleur to the family mausoleum at Dublin.

The situation of Miss Lambart was now disconsolate, and appeared to her, weakened in spirits by her late sufferings, as most melancholy and distressing. The death of the earl of Vandeleur gave not only Doneraile Castle to his son, but the superb mansion at Dublin also. The dowager, Ada knew, would submit to any inconvenience, rather than owe the slightest obligation to her son's wife ; and that remaining under a roof where she was now acknowledged mistress, was incompatible with the pride of the woman, as much as it was abhorrent to the feelings of the mother, who now looked upon the son, so lately her idol, as a being degraded and unworthy of her affection : but as her jointure-house was out of repair, Ada was

puzzled to guess where the dowager would go till it was made fit for her reception, but doubtless to some very retired place, to pass the first months of her widowhood.

This was a natural suggestion, and Ada dwelt upon it with melancholy forebodings and unpleasant expectations; she fearfully anticipated the necessity that would compel her, during the absence of the baroness Wandesford, to reside with the dowager countess of Vandeleur; for she was well acquainted with her imperious and implacable temper, her love of power, and how little influence the divine precepts of religion had over her mind, whose whole life had been devoted to "*the pomps and vanities of the world.*"

But Ada had given the countess dowager credit for sorrow she did not feel. The earl's death gave her little concern, only as it diminished her power, and deprived her of all control over the actions of her son; she had no intention to bewail her widowhood in retirement and solitude, but from her bed had written to Dublin, to secure a residence in the Phoenix Park, a situation airy and fashionable, which she

ordered to be furnished in a style of equal magnificence with the family mansion.

During her compulsory stay at Done-raile Castle, the young earl of Vandeleur and his mother met as seldom as possible, and then their behaviour to each other was cold and ceremonious; and their conversation never deviated from the business which they were constrained to arrange together.

Miss Lambart, though yet extremely weak, was unwilling to remain the guest of persons whose conduct and principles she could not approve, and still more unwilling to detain the countess dowager, where all within the castle, even inanimate objects, seemed to distress and irritate her: ever self-denying and amiable, Ada resolved to hazard a removal to Dublin, where she hoped to meet her newly-married friend, lady Stella Egerton, and shortly to be joined by Miss Belmore and lady **Indiana Corry**, in whose society she promised herself a renewal of the happiness her cousin Alfred had disturbed; and through whom her life had nearly been

sacrificed, by a jealous and vindictive woman.

The dowager countess had been informed by Mrs. Blandy, that lady Vandeleur intended to leave her dressing-room, and dine in the pink drawing-room, the day after the earl's remains were removed from the castle; and that a party of her friends were expected from Limerick, to spend the summer.—“Manufacturers of paper, woollen, or gloves,” said the dowager, scornfully; “all the *elite* relations of the countess of Vandeleur, I suppose; but that I may not be contaminated by the breath of these traders, I will be gone before I witness the arrival of such company.”

The day after the funeral, with its long procession, had set forward for Dublin, the dowager countess, arrayed in the sable weeds of widowhood, took a polite leave of all her guests, with the exception of the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, and expressed her hope to see them at her house in Dublin, where, on account of her niece, she should be frequently “at home” during the winter.

Miss Lambart, who had suffered much

mental as well as bodily anguish, during her stay at Doneraile Castle, was glad to depart, and she seated herself beside the dowager countess in her travelling carriage, with greater cheerfulness than she had felt since the return of her cousin from abroad: Nora parted from her foster-child, shedding tears of sincere affection, and praying that all sorts of good luck might attend her, and the saints preserve her from sickness and danger. To Janet she gave much good counsel, which with streaming eyes the giddy girl promised faithfully to remember: but Janet did not weep because she was going so many miles from her mother, but because she was leaving monsieur Lemain at the castle, who was to remain there all the summer; and there would be gay parties, and new faces; and though he had sworn he would never forget her, yet there was no depending upon men—out of sight out of mind; and after giving up all her thoughts to the subject, she might never be the mistress of the large hotel at Paris, the grandest place in the world—no, she might never be called madame Lemain. Full of these

sorrowful thoughts, Janet pursued her way in a travelling chaise with Mrs. Blandy, who, having undergone a good deal of fatigue in preparing for the journey, very unceremoniously settled herself comfortably in a corner of the chaise, and fell asleep, ill-naturedly denying the disconsolate Janet the consolation of conversing on her regret at parting with her lover, and expressing her doubts of his constancy.

The following day witnessed the departure of the countess of Drogheda and her daughter, for the earl's delightful seat in Antrim, within a pleasant ride of that great natural curiosity, the Giant's Causeway, whither they were escorted by the earl of Drogheda and the honourable colonel Lismore, who, with some other friends, was invited to remain till the commencement of the fashionable Dublin season.

The honourable Mrs. Carleton and Miss Belmore had taken leave a few hours previous to the dowager countess Vandeleur, on a summons from Mr. Carleton, who had returned to Ireland sooner than he expected, and wished them to join him on a tour to the lakes of Killarney. Of all

the visitors, none now remained but sir Harry Ogle, Mrs. Chatterton believed out of pure regard for her; but sir Harry Ogle was not the man that would pass a dull solitary day, without some stronger inducement than even her fortune held out to him. Had she known the true motive of his stay, it would have been a severe mortification to her vanity; it was to see the fair daughters of sir Hector Desmond, between whom, a fortune of near two hundred thousand pounds had been left by a distant relation of the family, besides what their father, a keen sportsman, who continually risked his neck by leaping over gates, hedges, and ditches, could leave them in addition.

Sir Harry thought it was worth while to try his chance with the fair heiresses, both of whom, he understood, were passable handsome, well educated, and agreeable—"Either must be better than a middle-aged widow, with green eyes and ill-formed nails," said sir Harry, as he took a solitary walk in the park, "and luck is every thing; for instance, Miss O'Brien, with only a paltry fifteen thousand pounds, has had the luck to marry a rich earl;

and with my advantages," said the little coxcomb, surveying his pink and white face in a pocket mirror, his constant companion, "with my advantages, I might aspire to a princess."

"Thank Heaven," said the countess of Vandeleur, as she sat before a superb mirror, arranging a rich blond cap, which Millefleur had just placed upon her shining ringlets, "thank Heaven, the stately dowager is gone, with all her train of prudes and perfects. Do take that squalling brat out of my hearing; his noise distracts me; it is time I should enjoy myself a little, for I have suffered mortification and trouble enough through him."

"I dare say that is very true, Charlotte," replied the honourable Mrs. Chatterton; "but he is worth suffering for, he is such a beautiful little fellow."

"Yes, he is very like me," returned the countess, smiling with self-complacency, as she glanced at her own countenance reflected in the mirror.

"And remember, Charlotte," continued Mrs. Chatterton, "you owe your elevation to him."

“I owe it to my own superior abilities,” returned the countess, haughtily; “but I must beg, Mrs. Chatterton, you will drop that very unceremonious manner of yours. When I was only Miss Obrien, I suffered you to address me by my Christian name; but your perpetual Charlotte really makes me nervous; and from this time, I trust you will recollect that I am the right honourable countess of Vandeleur, and always address me by my title.”

“I will certainly try to recollect,” said Mrs. Chatterton; “but if I should forget, our dear relationship——”

“We’ll be no excuse for disrespect and ill manners; besides, it will set an ill example to the Misses Desmond, whom I wish to forget their former familiarity, and to be sensible of the immense distance between an earl’s wife and the daughters of a country baronet.”

“I can remember when you were proud of an invitation to the baronet’s house.”

“True, madam; I was then Miss Obrien, but I am now countess of Vandeleur.”

END OF VOL. II.

